

Tuesday September 29 1998

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In G2

Who pays when men stray?

With European weather



Portrait

Ted's tale

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Education

Consuming children

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Gordon Brown, John Prescott and Tony Blair join in Cabinet applause from the conference platform for a speech by a new deal job recipient yesterday

PHOTOGRAPH BY DON MCHIE

Blair's blitz on crime

Zero-tolerance pilot schemes based on New York methods

Michael White
Political Editor

TONY Blair will today signal a new phase in his government's anti-crime campaign when he announces an extension of controversial zero-tolerance policing techniques to 26 crime hotspots throughout Britain.

The prime minister's pledge on crime will symbolise his determination to sustain the pace of modernising reform across the public services. His decision to highlight crime reflects his Middle East agenda and the need

to address voters at home as well as party activists in the conference hall.

Once the Home Office has identified suitable target areas, computer software devised for the New York police will be deployed to analyse crime patterns — for instance domestic burglaries — in neighbourhoods where they are dominant. Police and other agencies will then move in to tackle it.

Mr Blair will also reveal that car manufacturers have promised to help reduce car theft by one third over five years by improving anti-theft devices, vehicle records and better marking of car parts. The police also promise to

provide 2,000 secure car parks within 18 months.

Mr Blair's decision to target crime has been reinforced by this month's visit to New York for the Third Way conference, where he met the city's ambitious Republican mayor, Rudy Giuliani.

It was Mr Giuliani's use of computer software to analyse crime hotspots, street by street and crime by crime, which led to zero-tolerance saturation police techniques and "problem-orientated" policing of neighbourhoods.

With Jack Straw's encouragement, New York's success has been emulated in some British towns, with burglary dropping 30 per cent in Huddersfield and 21 per cent in Stockport. Areas in his cities from Glasgow and Edinburgh down to London and Bristol are certain to be among the 26 selected pilot schemes.

With Mr Straw's Crime and Disorder Act due to come into force tomorrow, ministers feel able to move on to the next phase of their campaign. Child curfews, fast-track justice for young offenders, new offences for racist or anti-social conduct and compulsory treatment of drug offenders are all part of the Act.



Mr Blair will declare that there can be no easing up in the battles ahead: voters gave New Labour its landslide mandate so it could take decisions that "they know in their hearts are necessary for Britain to win again."

While issuing a warning to head teachers and doctors, the prime minister will announce that, contrary to speculation, there will be a bill in the Queen's Speech in November dedicated to the next wave of welfare reform. It will concentrate on tightening the eligibility rules for disability pensions — though not for existing benefit holders.

"We would rather be popular than unpopular. But it is better to be unpopular than wrong," Mr Blair will tell the all-ticket audience in the Winter Gardens, many of whom will be waiting for words of comfort and reassurance that New Labour's project has heart as well as head.

Advancing briefing on Mr Blair's fifth speech as Labour leader stressed the uncompromising disciplinary nature in the prime minister's make-up, though he will also celebrate the £40 billion earmarked for health and education and his commitment to a "stronger, fairer Britain."

Only tough economic decisions can ensure the stability necessary for growth, success and better public services he will say, echoing the message given to the conference yesterday by his chancellor, Gordon Brown, and the Trade and Industry Secretary, Mr Mandelson.

Despite his commitment to helping the poorest in society, not least by fairer tax and benefits, Mr Brown angered some unions yesterday by his

insistence that he will not change economic course. He dismissed what he called soft options and "quick-fix alternatives" to his tight grip on interest rates and spending.

Mr Brown's tone overshadowed what had been billed as the chancellor's olive branch to Mr Blair, seeking to end media speculation of bad feelings between the two most powerful men in the government.

Though he repeatedly spoke of "Tony and I" and their shared 15-year-drive to power in leader-like terms, Mr Brown obliquely told the conference he was happy with his present job.

"These goals are what I know I am here to play a part in achieving them. These are my political ambitions, not the ambitions of office, but in the office I hold, to help fulfill our shared ambitions for our country," Mr Brown declared. It hardly amounted to a final abandonment of his hope to succeed Mr Blair — one day.

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Labour conference, page 4;
Andrew Roth and Rose Coward, page 5; Leader comment, page 5; Notebook, page 12

Serb troops assault Kosovo guerrilla strongholds

Belgrade claims war is over as it steps up anti-separatist push

Chris Bird in Belgrade and agencies

SERBIAN troops overran one of the last militant strongholds held by ethnic Albanian separatists in central Kosovo yesterday as the Serbian government sought to defuse international concern by claiming that "all anti-terrorist activities have ended."

In an offensive apparently designed to destroy the last hide-outs of the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) before Nato acts on its threat to bomb Yugoslavia's military infrastructure, special forces entered the Mount Jezero

area south of the provincial capital Pristina.

Western reporters saw Serb forces pounding villages around Mount Jezero on Sunday, as the focus of the offensive moved away from the area north of Pristina where more than 100 KLA guerrillas were killed in fighting last week.

The Serb-run media centre in Pristina reported that dozens of KLA guerrillas were killed at the weekend and hundreds of ethnic Albanian suspects arrested.

The fighting was said to be continuing yesterday morning. Yet in Belgrade the Serbian prime minister, Mirko Marjanovic, told a special ses-

sion of parliament which rejected foreign interference in the dispute. "Peace reigns in Kosovo today as of today all anti-terrorist activities have ended. They will be renewed only if any new bandit and terrorist activity reappears."

With Yugoslavia under threat of punitive Nato air strikes, Mr Marjanovic said troops and police were being ordered back to barracks, and that the separatist guerrillas had been defeated.

The declaration of victory was greeted sceptically by ethnic Albanians. Western diplomats and ordinary Serbs. There was no word from the Yugoslav president, Slobodan Milosevic.

Earlier, Western diplomats in Belgrade had predicted that the Serb government might declare the war in-



Mirko Marjanovic: Serbian PM faced with Nato threats

lashed to head off Nato's threat of air strikes without losing face at home.

Mr Marjanovic said Serbia's military presence in Kosovo, where nine-tenths of

the population are ethnic Albanians, would be reduced, although troops would remain on alert. Ethnic Albanians have a 10-day amnesty in which to hand over their weapons.

The war between Serb government forces and poorly armed ethnic Albanian guerrillas has claimed hundreds of lives.

Aid agencies estimate that more than 250,000 ethnic Albanians have been forced from their homes by Serbs. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees estimates that up to 50,000 Kosovo Albanians are hiding in the mountains and forests without shelter.

In the village of Studencane in southern Kosovo, reporters and diplomats witnessed Serb bombardment of ethnic Albanian settlements in what Serb

forces said were mopping-up operations. Villagers said ethnic Albanian fighters had left the area.

Last week the United States and its Western allies asked Nato member states to prepare for possible air attacks on Yugoslavia if Mr Milosevic refused to halt the fighting and negotiate with Kosovo's majority.

Enver Maloku, head of the ethnic Albanian information centre in Pristina, warned Western states not to take the Serb government's declaration at face value.

Mr Maloku said: "It would be a great mistake to believe the Serbian prime minister, because every time there is such a declaration, the offensive goes on — dozens more Albanians are killed and thousands forced from their homes."

MCC's record 211-year stand against women broken at last

Vivak Chaudhary
Sports Correspondent

WOMEN will be allowed to join the MCC, cricket's most exclusive club, for the first time in its 211-year history after members voted last night to lift a ban on admitting them.

The 17,500 members of the Marylebone Cricket Club voted in favour of lifting the ban, which meets the two-thirds majority required to change the club's constitution. There was a 77 per cent overall turnout: 69.8 per cent voted in favour of admitting women, with 30.2 per cent voting against.

The decision will come as a huge relief to the club's committee, which argued that a continuation of the ban would tarnish the game's reputation in the run-up to next year's Cricket World Cup in England and was costing the MCC financially in lost sponsorship deals.

In February, 56 per cent of members voted to accept women, but the move failed because the club's constitution requires a two-thirds majority.

The historic result came shortly after 9pm at Lord's cricket ground, the MCC's headquarters. It followed an intense campaign by the MCC committee and leading members who argue that it was time to remove the arcane rule.

Colin Ingleby-Mackenzie, MCC president, said: "I'm very excited. It's something we have been striving for. It would have been a sad day if we had not been able to progress into the 21st century on a level footing of male and female membership."

He denied the decision was influenced by financial



reasons. "We were doing it for cricket and for the club generally. Money didn't come into our thinking at all," he said.

Referring to members who had voted to maintain the ban, he said: "I think they will see the light. There were people who were always going to vote against, but we had a very good team."

Mr Ingleby-Mackenzie said that there was a possibility of maintaining an all-male bar in the Lord's Pavilion. He said: "I think it's a good idea to have a small male bar, but it will only be a small part of the club, the rest of it will be all open."

Rachel Heyhoe-Flint, the former captain of the England women's cricket team, and a campaigner to abolish the ban on women, said last night: "It's been a seven-year gestation period since I first tried to become a member. It's been well worth waiting for, but now we still have to wait and see if I will be admitted when I apply as a member because I may be the last one many people want as a member of the MCC."

Last night's decision was welcomed by the England and Wales Cricket Board, the sport's governing body. The decision to allow



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+ Kill or cure: How the side effects of prescribed drugs may be as serious as the disease they are meant to cure

After the Social Democratic landslide the Chancellor-elect Gerhard Schröder plans a quick coalition deal with environmentalist MPs

Germany goes for red-green alliance

Ian Traynor in Bonn

GERMANY'S new chancellor-elect, Gerhard Schröder, yesterday pitched his country into uncharted territory by announcing he intended to form a centre-left government with the small Greens party.

ity for a "Red-Green" government stable enough.

Negotiations on a government programme and the dividing up of cabinet seats are to begin on Friday. Both SPD and Greens leaders said they wanted to reach a quick deal.

As the scale of the landslide became clear, the campaign casualties in the Christian Democratic (CDU) camp of Chancellor Helmut Kohl started mounting. After Mr Kohl's instant announcement on Sunday night that he was surrendering his party chairmanship after 26 years, Theo

Weigel, his finance minister and leader of the Bavarian sister party, the Christian Social Union (CSU), also said he was stepping down. He was joined by the CSU general secretary, Bernd Protzner.

There are certain to be further casualties on the centre-right. The SPD had only once mustered more support than the CDU and CSU in the history of the post-war republic — in 1972 under Willy Brandt.

On Sunday the SPD took just under 41 per cent, to the CDU/CSU's 55.2 per cent.

"The SPD has won a historic victory, one that most of our members did not expect," said Oskar Lafontaine, the SPD chairman.

Planked by Mr Lafontaine, who is tipped to take over from Mr Weigel as finance minister, Mr Schröder said the decision to opt for a pact with the Greens was the "logical conclusion" of the election and reflected the voters' will.

As provisional final results were posted yesterday, the Red-Green majority in the new Bundestag, or lower house, expanded to 21 seats — more than double the majority Mr Kohl has enjoyed for the past four years.

The opposition benches include 35 seats for the far left Party of Democratic Socialism (PDS), the former East German communists, so the SPD-Greens have a 56-seat

majority over the outgoing coalition of Christian Democrats and liberals in the new 662-seat chamber.

While Mr Schröder has maintained that he would not be dependent on the PDS for his majority, the former communists are unlikely on most issues to vote with the right.

The Greens, already in coalition governments in four of the 16 federal states, braced themselves for the national and international stage. Their most pragmatic and formidable leader, Joschka Fischer, is being tipped to be foreign minister. Jürgen Trittin, a powerful leftwinger, hinted he might be in line for the

education portfolio. In 1990-94 Mr Trittin served under Mr Schröder in a Red-Green government in Lower Saxony, and both men yesterday hinted they could repeat the experiment at national level.

But while Mr Fischer prepares to strut the international stage, SPD officials indicated that Mr Schröder may try to strip the foreign ministry of authority over European policy. Such matters will be at the core of the hard bargaining in Bonn in the next fortnight.

The balance of power within the putative coalition could hardly be better for Mr Schröder. On the eve of the

election, SPD sources said the dream scenario was a strong SPD and a weak Greens contingent that could still muster a sufficient majority.

This was precisely the outcome, with the Greens falling slightly to 6.7 from 7.3 per cent and forfeiting two seats. They are expected to get a maximum of three cabinet seats, and if Mr Fischer and Mr Trittin become ministers there are certain to be protests from women in the party, who constituted 50 per cent of Green MPs in the last parliament.

In his apparent drive to break the mould of German politics, Mr Schröder said he would seek the outgoing chancellor's advice, particularly on foreign affairs. The United States, Europe and the rest of the world could depend on Mr Schröder's Germany as a partner, he said.

He also said his most controversial shadow cabinet appointment would be in the new government. Jost Stollmann, a millionaire businessman, aged 43, and a non-SPD figure with no political background, is unpopular in the party for advocating sweeping reforms of the social security system.

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Granada pays out £1.5m for police libel

Helen Carter

THE prestigious current affairs programme *World in Action* yesterday made a record libel damages payment to three police officers, who were wrongly accused of perjury and fabricating evidence after a prisoner was killed in a cell.

Granada, the makers of *World in Action*, paid an estimated £1.5 million, with the three officers each receiving £500,000. The officers' costs were thought to be £1.2 million, and Granada's own costs were around £250,000. It is thought to be the biggest libel settlement by a television company.

In March, Granada was forced to pay £1.3 million to Marks & Spencer for a *World in Action* broadcast which falsely claimed the company used child labour.

The settlement is another blow to the programme's reputation, which next year will

officers, said the programme unequivocally asserted that Sgt Peter Bleakley, PC Emyln Welsh and retired PC Paul Giles had fabricated evidence against Kennedy and perjured themselves at the trial. He said the programme seemed to suggest that there had been a cover-up and raised the suspicion that one of them may have been the killer.

Speaking of his relief yesterday, Sgt Bleakley said: "We are all pleased it has come to an end. It has just taken a very long time. We all live with the memories of that night and we are glad that everyone concerned with this case can now get on with the rest of their lives."

Granada said there was never any intention to suggest that the officers were involved in the killing or a cover-up. A statement from the company said *World in Action* investigated the case over several months with "painstaking care".

It said: "It was almost 18 months after the programme — during Mr Kennedy's first re-trial — that the prosecution discovered for the first time a critically important police document which contradicted the evidence uncovered by *World in Action*."

"Until that moment no-one knew of this document, its significance or its contents — even the lawyers defending or prosecuting Mr Kennedy in the original trial, or the police officers who carried out the murder inquiry."

"What the programme said was that these officers had given false evidence or fabricated documents and we now know that those assertions were wrong. We therefore are apologising."

Granada added that the programme had explicitly said it did not know who had killed Quinn.

A spokesman said: "This action is not going to result in *World in Action* being taken off air. No decision has yet been taken about whether it will run alongside the new six-minute programme or whether it will be absorbed into it."

Paul O'Brien, deputy general secretary of the Police Federation of England and Wales, said: "After nearly six-and-a-half years of maintaining their innocence, these officers have rightly received substantial damages and have been awarded all the legal costs in this case."



From left: Emyln Welsh, Paul Giles and Peter Bleakley emerge from the six-year battle to prove their innocence



A boy caught in the storm beside Lake Pontchartrain as winds from Hurricane Georges reached the New Orleans area

PHOTOGRAPH BY TED JACKSON

Hurricane wreaks havoc on battered Gulf states

Mark Tran in Washington

HURRICANE Georges, with ferocious winds, torrential rain and flooding on the states bordering the Gulf of Mexico as thousands of people were evacuated.

Gusts of 175mph were reported at Keesler air force base in Biloxi, Mississippi, where the eye of the storm crossed from the Gulf of Mexico and reached shore early yesterday.

Mississippi governor Kirk Fordice said he had asked President Clinton to declare an emergency, clearing the way for federal aid in rebuilding devastated areas.

"The wind is really blowing out there and things are hitting the windows," said 20-year-old Rachael Alonso, from a shelter in Gulfport, Mississippi, with her two children and about 300 other people.

So far in the southern states there has only been

one storm-related death: that of a man killed in a New Orleans fire started by candles after the hurricane knocked out electricity.

Flooding posed the biggest threat. National Guardsmen waded through chest-deep water to carry people to safety from a flooded housing estate in downtown Mobile, Alabama. In the Florida panhandle, guardsmen had to rescue about 200 people from their flooded homes.

By early afternoon, Georges was virtually stationary near Gulfport, dumping heavy rain over four states — Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama and the Florida panhandle.

Georges' 105mph winds are expected to better this southern stretch with downpours of up to 30 inches in the next 24 hours.

At least 330 people were killed by the hurricane last week when it lashed the Caribbean and the Florida Keys. Hundreds of thousands were made homeless.

The absence of fatalities on the Gulf Coast was attributed to the evacuation of more than 1.5 million people.

New Orleans escaped serious damage when Georges veered east of the city. Relentless rain and a storm surge could have submerged the low-lying city, protected only by levees. About 10,000 people took shelter in the giant superdome, home of the New Orleans Saints, while thousands more filled seven other shelters in the city.

Hurricane centre director Jerry Jarrell said: "It's going to be causing very heavy rains for a long period of time and those winds are still continuing to blow and will probably all day. So it's just going to be a miserable situation."

Along the Gulf Coast power cuts affected more than 350,000 customers, airports and highways were closed and curfews were in effect.

MCC votes to lift ban on women members

continued from page 1
women members followed weeks of heated debate, with some MCC members protesting that they were being railroaded into voting to lift the ban.

In August, following criticism from both the Sports Minister, Tony Banks, and Tony Blair, the MCC Committee urged members to accept the inevitable and allow women into the pavilion at Lord's, saying that the continuing ban posed a "serious threat" to the club's future.

The committee warned members, whose average age is 57, that disallowing women meant MCC money would never be forthcoming and said that two commercial sponsors had already pulled out of the club as a result of the ban's single sex rules.

Last night's outcome will please cricket officials who are trying to revamp the game's image and make it appeal to a wider, younger audience.

Under the MCC's changed constitution, up to 10

women will be chosen as honorary members within the next 12 months. A women's MCC team will also be set up, playing up to 10 games a season against Oxbridge sides, public schools and touring teams.

Women who want to join the club through the conventional waiting list — standing at 9,500 — will probably have to wait at least 18 years before being admitted. Like other potential members, they will need four members to support their application.

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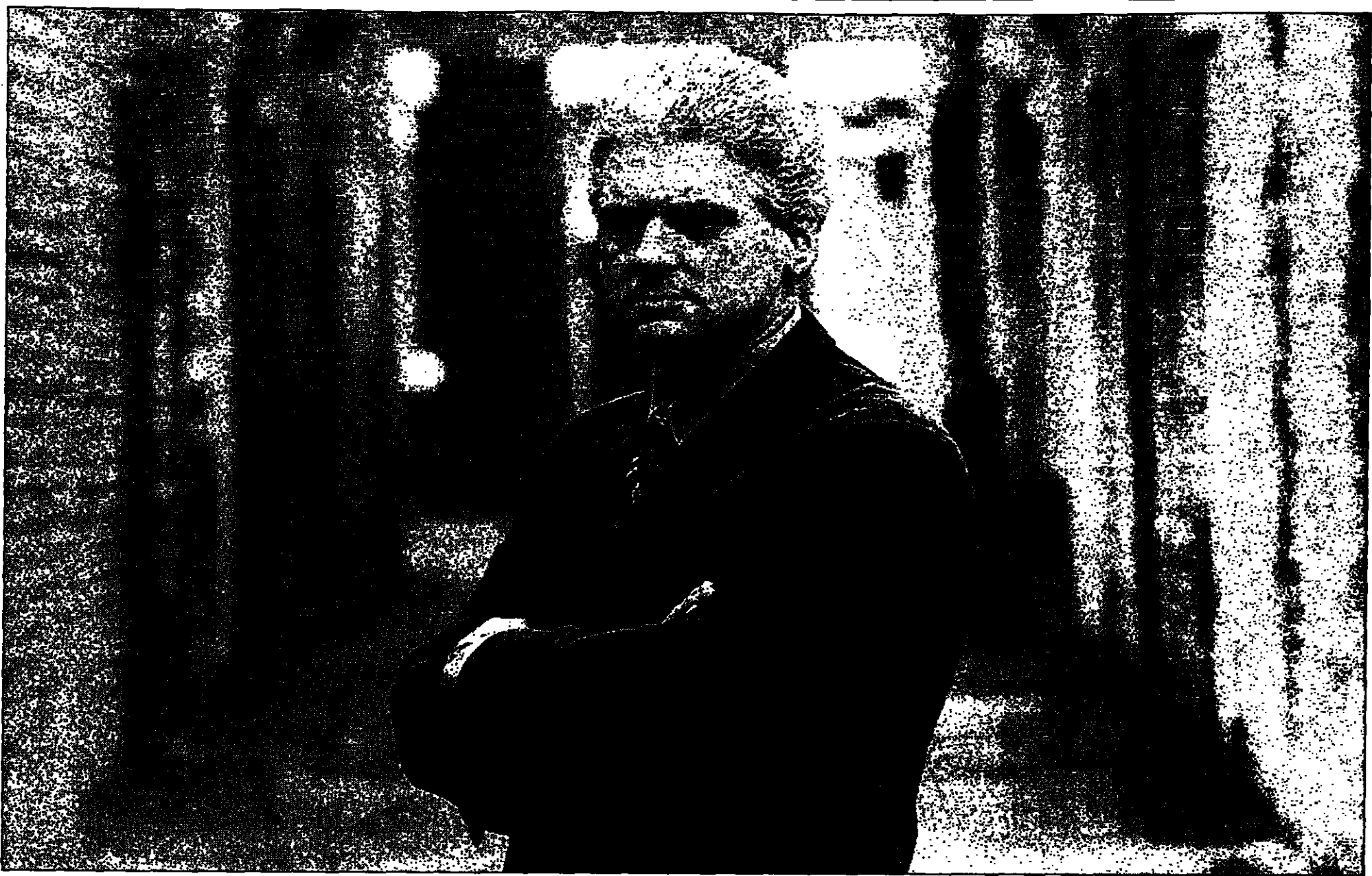
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Putting more officers on the beat is no longer seen as the way to crack down on criminals. The way forward is 'problem orientated' no nonsense policing, tackling trouble in the communities

Alan Travis on a force for change



Det Supt Ray Mallon pioneered the zero tolerance approach in Britain but was subsequently suspended for allegedly leaking information. PHOTOGRAPH: CARL RUTHERFORD

Seeing crime as 'order maintenance'

THE decision by the Prime Minister today to put his personal weight behind the "zero tolerance" scheme to target 25 towns and cities as crime "hotspots" could sound the death knell for the British bobby pounding the beat.

The Government's £250 million three-year crime reduction strategy is based on the idea that it is naive to believe that you can cut crime simply by employing more police officers.

It argues that although the sight of officers patrolling the streets can reduce the public's fear of crime, such random patrols actually only rarely catch criminals.

Instead, the police are to be asked to adopt a twin track policy of "order maintenance" — also known as zero tolerance — in crime hotspots backed by "problem orientated policing" or "intelligence-led policing" in wider parts of the country.

Pioneering schemes in Huddersfield, Stockport, and Milton Keynes show that some spectacular results can be gained with these policing styles — burglaries falling by up to 30 per cent — but no-one knows if the results can be sustained.

"Order maintenance" (for those politicians who want to avoid the tainted term of "zero tolerance") means concentrating police effort on a small area with particular crime problems, and policing it very strictly.

Instead of police being sent out on routine random patrol, all patrols are directed at places and at times when crime is known to occur — known trouble spots.

It also means that thieves, burglars, vandals and drug-takers are all charged and taken to court when they are arrested, and not just cautioned. The most successful example of this policing is the once prostitution-ridden area behind Kings Cross station, in London, which has been cleaned up through Operation Welwyn. The police enforcement operation was quickly

followed up by the local authority with environmental action to make the area less attractive to drug dealers.

In some zero tolerance schemes the police adopt "saturation patrols", quadrupling the number of police present. They only have to be in the area up to 15 minutes to cut crime in a hotspot by half, according to advocates of the scheme.

But the Home Office says that research evidence going back to the 1960s shows this approach only produces limited results.

Its report, Reducing Offending, published in July, says: "There is moderately strong evidence that it can reduce serious crime in the short term, but there are large question marks — over the ability of the police to distinguish between firm and harsh policing styles, and over the long-term effect of arresting many more people for relatively minor offences."

"Police tactics in some implementations of zero-tolerance have been described as over-zealous and this can lead to poor police-community relations."

The second technique to be highlighted by Tony Blair today is based on a very simple idea: that policing should be about solving the underlying problems in the community — and not simply responding to emergency calls.

Police target repeat victims of burglars and other criminals. The British Crime Survey showed that 4 per cent of victims suffer 44 per cent of all crimes, and this pattern of repeat victimisation is true for a wide range of crimes, including burglary, racial attacks, domestic violence and car crime.

Pilot schemes in Huddersfield and Kirkholt show that targeting the victims with locks, bolts and crime prevention advice can yield large reductions in burglary.

Recent Home Office research shows that if £38 million were spent on targeting the higher-risk areas, about two million of Britain's

Clampdown on car crime puts police in driving seat

THE promise to be made by Tony Blair today to cut car crime by up to 30 per cent is based on a 14-point police strategy to end Britain's record as the car crime capital of Europe, writes Alan Travis.

The first priority agreed by chief constables is to curb the number of thefts in car parks, with the rise of environmentally friendly "park and ride" schemes making them a prime target for thieves.

Recent research shows that 480 out of every 100,000 vehicles in car parks is either stolen or broken into by thieves. This compares with 110 cars for every 100,000 parked on the road being hit by thieves and vandals.

Among the measures to be adopted by police are:

- A national goal of 2,000 secured car parks using closed circuit television by the year 2000.

- Making it compulsory for all drivers to carry their MoT and insurance documents with them. Giving the police the power to clamp and impound cars which are not insured.

households, with effective anti-burglary campaigns, it could prevent £95 million worth of crime and cut the annual burglary rate by more than 5 per cent.

The other aspect of problem-orientated policing is to target the high profile repeat offenders with the aim of securing sufficient sound evidence to get a conviction and a long sentence.

This may involve the local police getting together with local education and social ser-



Police will lead fight against car thefts with 14-point strategy. PHOTOGRAPH: GARRY WEASER

- Restricting the supply of number plates to licensed dealers to make it harder for thieves to disguise stolen vehicles.

- Levy on all car insurance premiums to fund a multi-agency group committed to target car crime.

- Stamping identification numbers on car parts to

prevent sales of stolen second-hand components and giving the police the power to enter scrapyards to curb the stolen car parts trade.

- Putting the onus on new owners to prove their cars were not stolen before insurance is granted.

Last year there was a 14 per cent drop in vehicle

crime, which includes thefts from cars and stolen cars, with the overall total falling from 1.3 million of offences to 1.1 million. But over the longer term the trend is even more spectacular with the 1998 figure for car crime of 1.5 million offences falling to 1.1 million last year. Now Tony Blair is promising that will be repeated.

the main reservation about this approach is that many police forces find it possible to get involved with tackling underlying problems on a one-off basis, but that they find it much more difficult to get away from simply responding to the phones and do it routinely week in and week out.

This approach also involves a fundamental choice that Mr Blair is unlikely to mention when he showcases the strategy today: the police simply

do not have the officers to mount the traditional random patrols and to engage in these "intelligence-led policing" operations.

That is why earlier this year the Home Secretary, Jack Straw, said he would seriously consider an idea of Chief Constable Ian Blair of Surrey for private patrols licensed by the police. It could yet prove a runner, and that would spell the end of the traditional bobby pounding the pavements.

The Home Office says that

'Hairy-chested' approach does not lead to rational policing

Peter Hetherington

TONY Blair knows all about the man credited with introducing a zero-tolerance style of policing in Britain. Like a string of other senior politicians playing the law and-order card, he has visited Detective Superintendent Ray Mallon in Middlesbrough, conveniently next door to his Sedgefield constituency.

Few policemen have achieved such a celebrity status. When he took over in the north-east town two years ago, Mr Mallon promised to resign if crime did not fall within 12 months. It duly fell. He was hailed a hero and even beat the Prime Minister to become BBC Radio Cleveland's personality of the year.

But it soon became clear that the tough style of policing in Middlesbrough had detractors as well as supporters. Several solicitors complained about an erosion of civil liberties, particularly the liberal use of CS spray.

Local people who became the victims of high-profile police raids, with television cameras in tow, complained about being singled out for unwelcome publicity.

And at least one Labour councillor voiced serious concerns about police operating "very close to the line".

Concern arose a year ago in Middlesbrough when two police officers were suspended amid allegations that prisoners in police cells had been given heroin in return for confessions. As a result, several crown court cases collapsed amid doubts over police evidence.

The assistant chief constable of Cleveland, Richard Brunstrom, denied that pressure on officers to cut crime

had led to some crossing the line. Six weeks later, Ray Mallon himself was suspended for allegedly leaking information — a charge he vigorously denied.

In shopping centres, pubs and clubs, people queued to sign a petition attacking his suspension, nine months ago, and the view is growing that Mallon could soon be reinstated. Although Mr Mallon has no link with the current investigations — he came to Middlesbrough from a neighbouring police district after inquiries had begun — the style of his high-profile policing is still causing controversy. Since he was suspended, his supporters claim some crimes have risen dramatically — a charge the detractors deny.

Lawyers have also had to deal with the consequences of police using CS spray. In Cleveland, the smallest force in the country, it was used more than 600 times in one year, the highest in any constabulary area.

Bob Pitt, a senior Middlesbrough councillor and a member of the local police authority until last May, said: "The spray seems to be used as a first line of attack rather than a last line of defence. It is used in an aggressive way."

He claims that zero-tolerance alienates people rather than building bridges with communities. "Police, on occasions, appear to be working very close to the line and sometimes appear to be going over it. There are some very progressive police people around the country, but this hairy-chested approach, getting officers psyched up and going on the streets to be tough, does not lead to rational policing. And errors of judgment... have been made."

But to others in Middlesbrough, Mr Mallon, known as "Robocop" is a hero who stood up for ordinary people on the town's large estates — the main victims of crime. He promised to take their side against the criminals. And they want him back.

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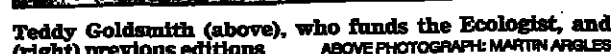
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Paul Brown
Environment Correspondent

It had used the edition to attack Monsanto, the multinational genetic engineering company. But the Ecologist's printers — Penwells of Sal-tash, Cornwall — destroyed the 14,000 print run without notice. Although it refused to comment on its decision, it is understood the company was afraid of laying itself open to a libel action.

The Ecologist has been controversial since it was founded. It is read on both sides of the Atlantic and was one of the first publications to point to the potentially dangerous power of multinational companies.

Penwells were not prepared to discuss their decision to destroy the edition. "We cannot comment on what has hap-

Mr Goldsmith said: "The fact that Monsanto had noth-

It, says the issue, was put together in response to Monsanto's advertisements in which it claimed it wanted a free and open discussion.

genetically modified crops as a protest. It has been the subject of blanket injunctions banning its activities against Monsanto.

When she appeared at Plymouth crown court yesterday Judge William Taylor told her: "On the reports I have read you are a very sick young woman. But the doctors do not know whether your condition can be treated or not." He said he was satisfied Cummings suffered from a psychopathic disorder and he made an interim hospital order. — *Geoffrey Gibbs*

The university's disability adviser, Jane McLarty, said: "Alexander hasn't used computers an awful lot, but I am going to introduce him to that. If after three years we haven't managed to make him more independent, then to some extent, we will have failed. People with dyslexia are perfectly capable of dealing with ideas. He's obviously very motivated and can work on his own." He is one of 50 or 60 students at Cambridge who suffer from dyslexia, though few are as profoundly dyslexic as he is.

Lawler, who had been on attachment to the 1st Worcester and Sherwood Forest Regiment at the time, admitted five charges of criminal damage and one charge of disobeying unit standing orders. He was so ashamed at what he had done he offered to resign his commission. The judge advocate ruled that half of the full sentence would be appropriate.

POP PUNDIT Jonathan King has teamed up with TV executives to organise a prime time Record Of The Year 1998 which will be the first pop awards programme for which results are decided exclusively by viewers. Short-listed acts will either perform live or have their videos shown on an hour-long show on December 19. The results will be broadcast in a 30-minute special later that evening.

LABOUR-controlled Bradford council which has a 40 per cent stress rate among employees has created a \$3,000 prayer and meditation room. Conservatives described the project as 'a waste of money which will go down like a lead balloon' but a spokesman for the Bishop of Bradford said: "it is a brilliant idea. Other large employers should follow this lead." — *Martin Wainwright*



Martin Wahrwisch

Greater Manchester police said last night that two girls aged 14 and 15 were being held at Chadderton police station. A spokeswoman said

over time," said Mary Hale, aged 73. "She was very, very thin and quite smart but she wore odd things, like black shiny macs with the hood up

back garden, but there was never any trouble. When she had all the cats, the RSPCA came round and took all but two away."

A nearby doctor's receptionist, who did not want to give her name, said that Mrs Lillie was "tormented by kids" who hanged on her door demanding money.

and if she wanted me to do anything about them. I was surprised when I heard where she'd been found because Lily's not that gullible to have

The pensioner, who has not been named, collapsed and died at a friend's house on Sunday night, half an hour

Rare Quilts

"Mr Denne seems to have vanished into thin air and we appeal to anybody who thinks they might have seen him to

Anyone who believes they
have seen him should call
Kent social services on 01622-
606200.





Blackpool 98

Economy: Chancellor offers end to privilege and opportunity to all, in return for 'difficult decisions' that in long-term will remedy Britain's productivity deficit

Unswerving Brown rejects the quick fix

Larry Elliott
Economics Editor

GORDON BROWN unveiled his vision of an American-style classless Britain yesterday in an uncompromising defence of Labour's policies of boom and bust.

Warning critics that there were no quick fixes or magic wands, the Chancellor stressed that the Government was laying the foundations for a society of opportunity rather than privilege.

His commitment to long-term stability was designed to help build a "work your way up Britain... where the issue is not where you come from, or what school you went to, but the dreams you have, and the efforts you make".

To the dismay of some union leaders concerned at the strong pound, high interest rates, and public sector pay limits, the Chancellor affirmed there would be no change in strategy. "It is because of our commitment to long-term stability, even more essential at a time of world instability, that from this Government there will be no U-turns. No left turns. No right turns. No return to Tory boom and bust. We have not come this far as a party, we have not come this far as a country, to turn back now."

Replying from the conference floor, Union leader Rodney Bickerstaffe engaged in what he dubbed "constructive criticism", pleading for "jam today" for his members in the health service. He urged the Chancellor: "Let's try a new, fairer way for public sector pay, so far behind the private sector and the huge City and boardroom likes. Not jam yesterday, not jam tomorrow, but a little bit of jam today."

Rodney Bickerstaffe

'There will be no U-turns. No left turns. No right turns. No return to Tory boom and bust'
Gordon Brown

'Let's try a fairer way for public sector pay. Not jam yesterday, not jam tomorrow, but a little bit of jam today'
Rodney Bickerstaffe

nor laissez faire — the old Tory way, to do nothing, to leave people isolated, defenceless and powerless in the face of change.

"And it is only the Labour Party that understands this new role for our government in a new age — not government suppressing markets, not government surrendering to markets, but government helping people equip themselves for every challenge these global markets bring."

The Government's aim was to put in place a long-term platform to remedy the economy's long-term problem of inadequate capacity, which meant that every time growth picked up the result was higher inflation.

"And it is to end this repeated cycle of boom and bust that we made the Bank of England independent — and gave it the membership and remit, which I reaffirm, to achieve the stability, that is an essential precondition for long-term investment, growth and jobs."

Mr Brown said he understood the concerns of manufacturers at the effect of the strong pound, but stressed that a greater long-term threat was the instability of boom and bust. It was the Government's rejection of short-termism and stop-go that had prompted the "difficult spending decisions" of the last two years.

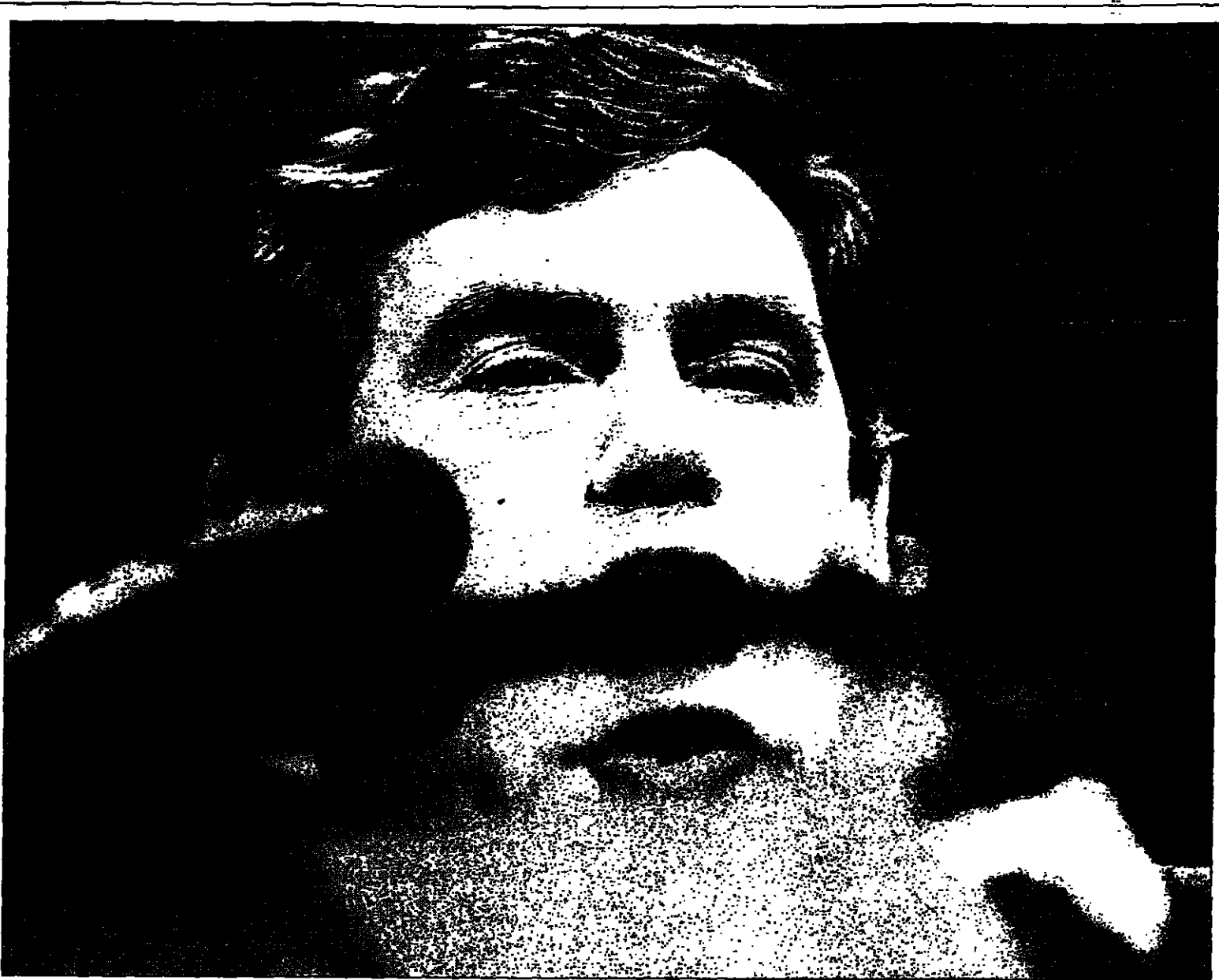
"I tell this conference there is no other way. No solution, or even comfort, in soft options, no magic wand solution, no quick fix alternative to these long-term policies for achieving the goals we share. "It is in the pursuit of our long-term goals of growth and employment that we will resist the inflationary way to growth short-termism, the disinvest rather than invest short-termism, the spend now pay later short-termism, the take that you can get now and sacrifice the future short-termism."

Rehearsing next year's Budget theme of remedying the productivity deficit, the Chancellor said: "We will reverse restrictive practices, and replace them with a Britain that is open to competition, efficiency and innovation. We will take on every indefensible vested interest, so that once the walls of privilege are broken down, the potential of all our people will be allowed to flourish."

"I want a Britain that is an island of opportunity, united by shared values not divided by narrow separatism; where what matters is not what you were born to, but how everyone can use the potential they were born with. A Britain where everyone can work their way up free of privilege, elitism and class."

John Edmonds, leader of the GMB union, commented: "Instead of waiting helplessly while unemployment goes through 2 million, why don't we have a grown-up debate about Britain's fundamental problems?" But Bill Morris, of the transport workers, said Mr Brown had underscored the fact that there could be no "quick fix" to the economy's problems.

Blair's androids, page 5
Leader comment, page 9



No magic wand... Gordon Brown reflected in the lectern as he delivered his speech yesterday

PHOTOGRAPHS: DON MCPHEE



David Obaje with Sarah Macaulay, Gordon Brown's girlfriend, after delivering his New Deal speech

Model worker tells how he quit life of dead-end jobs and dole and found his feet with help of New Deal

Nicholas Watt
Political Correspondent

GORDON Brown's minders plucked a model worker from the New Deal programme for the unemployed yesterday to warm up the conference ahead of the Chancellor's speech.

David Obaje, aged 24, from Manchester, had impeccable credentials for his choreographed double act with Mr Brown. After leaving school with two GCSEs, he struggled for years through dead-end jobs, in-

terspersed with unemployment, until he was saved by the New Deal programme. Speaking from a New Labour welfare-to-work script, he said: "I can't tell you how important it is to get getting on in life... in the past I was treated just like another number on the dole register."

He joined the programme, which is spending billions of pounds training the young unemployed, after seeing an advertisement and was immediately placed with an adviser. "He works through your problems with you — it's a key part of the programme," Mr Obaje said.

He got a job with the Manchester charity Rathbone CI as a computer support assistant. He earns £150 a week. His employer gets a bonus, but the New Deal aims to give him enough experience so he no longer need the programme.

He welcomed his regular wage but criticised the Government for cutting off many benefits workers claimed before joining the programme. "It should be more gradual," he said.

After his speech Mr Brown told him: "David, by your speech today and by the work you do every day, you remind us why we are in politics."

Afterwards a quick-witted GMB official snapped up Mr Obaje as a member.

Mandelson steps out of the shadows

Simon MacAskill, Chief Political Correspondent

PETER Mandelson, who for years orchestrated Labour conferences from the sidelines, yesterday made his first speech to delegates, but won only polite applause.

His debut was quickly upstaged by an angry outburst from the Post Office workers' union worried about the threat of privatisation, setting the stage for months of battle between the union and Mr Mandelson.

Mr Mandelson, who as Trade and Industry Secretary has to rule on the future of the Post Office, ducked the

controversial issue, partly because he has to await the outcome of a review. He was followed almost immediately by Derek Hodgson, the Post Office workers' leader, who received a standing ovation after demanding the Government honour pledges to keep the Post Office in public ownership, a visible demonstration that Old Labour attitudes are still alive.

Mr Hodgson, whose attack carried force because he is normally a loyalist, told the conference the Post Office workers were "tired of being used as a political football by splenetic backroom boys in Whitehall".

Mr Mandelson's speech echoed the sentiments of the

Chancellor, Gordon Brown, about the need to avoid short-term economic solutions.

Less used than most of his Cabinet colleagues to making speeches, he adopted a low-key approach, and the response reflected that. He made few concessions to Old Labour sentiments, winning his few bursts of applause only when he did, such as a promise that for a Labour Party "unemployment can never be a price worth paying".

His best moments came with basic self-deprecating jokes, and he opened by saying: "Stepping out of the shadows at last. Better me out of the darkness than in." He said it was particularly appropriate

that he should be introduced by the International Development Secretary, Clare Short, who had once condemned spin doctors as people who work in the dark.

He won laughs when he described himself as a revolutionary. "I have not been at the DTI very long. Nine weeks today in fact. But something very dramatic has happened to me in those weeks. Some of you won't believe it, I know: but I've become a revo-

lutionary. Don't worry, not a Marxist revolutionary but a modern, industrial revolutionary."

He accused the Conservatives of having "set out with ruthlessness to weaken the already weak". He made a promise: the Conservatives had created a basic imbalance at the workplace, which the Labour government's new proposals, Fairness at Work, would correct: "I personally guarantee."

Shunned Draper spends more time with his family

Diary

Seumas Milne

THE NEW Labour cock has been crowing for Derek Draper, one-time cheerleader of the Blairite avant-garde and the man whose over-enthusiasm for trading on his government connections led to Labour's lobbying scandal.

The Chortley wide boy has, it transpires, been told by his former Millbank Tower intimates that his presence in Blackpool this week would be "unhelpful" and is now languishing in Primrose Hill, north London, far from the business opportunities and other excitements offered by a modern Labour conference.

Draper insists no pressure was applied. "I was ambivalent about going," he says, insisting family and work commitments were the deciding factor. Labour insiders, however, confirm the sacked lobbyist was warned off by the hierarchy. "They should stop kicking a man when he's down," Draper complained.

MEANWHILE, his tormentor, Greg Palast, the freelance journalist who broke the Drapergate story in the Observer, has had his New Statesman conference pass withdrawn after a complaint from a female delegate allegedly involving an unwelcome nocturnal hotel room visit. An Observer spokeswoman said she hoped the accusation was not true.

JOHAN Humphrys, the BBC Today programme presenter, could have been forgiven for suspecting he was getting the same treatment yesterday morning, when he found himself locked in a lavatory without a door handle as he was about to begin a live interview with the newly-proclaimed "industrial revolutionary", Peter Mandelson. The day was saved by Tony Blair biographer, Jon Sopel, who heard Humphrys' cries for help from the next cubicle.

IT ALSO turned out to be a difficult day for Gordon Brown, who made the Freudian slip that all New Labour politicians dread. The party's achievements should

banish forever, he told delegates, "the myth that there is a difference between a Labour and Conservative Government".

Closely studied of the published text of the speech reveals the Chancellor had meant to say "no difference". In another quintessential Brownian passage, he thundered at his critics: "No U-turns, no left turns, no right turns." In an earlier draft, that had been followed by one final demand: "no more interns". The phrase was, however, dropped as a less than fraternal towards the US president.

BUT THE loudest noise to be heard in Labour's Blackpool backrooms yesterday was that of buck-passing, as party hacks pushed to blame each other for Sunday's election of four left-wing recalcitrants to the national executive.

Margaret McDonagh, the new general secretary, who is involved in a long-running turf war with the Prime Minister's political secretary, Sally Morgan, seemed to be the main target. Was this not the woman who had said she would "deliver for Tony", her critics asked. Had she not authorised telephone canvassing when Blair had specifically vetoed it? When Mark Seddon, the Tribune editor who topped the poll, arrived in Blackpool yesterday, he could not find a soul who would admit not having voted for him — including several cabinet ministers.

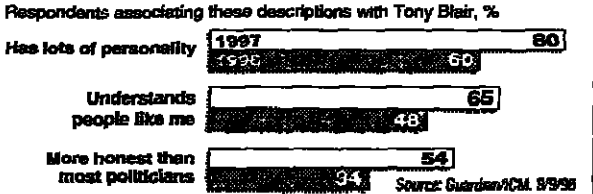
Conference briefing Tony Blair

Progress

Poll ratings still place Tony Blair in the stratosphere, although he has begun the journey back to earth. In the latest Guardian/ICM poll his personal rating fell from 80 to 60 per cent. Conference will surely applaud his achievements of the past year, most notably his round-the-clock negotiations which produced the Good Friday Agreement in Northern Ireland. But rusty rank and file members are torn between admiration for his landslide

victory and hostility to his cheerleader with appealing to Middle England. Last year's cut in heretics to strike paymen, which triggered Labour's biggest backbench rebellion, still stirs emotions among the grassroots. Indeed, that the party was implementing a Tory agenda: But the £40m extra cash for health and education will have earned cheers among party members who had begun to wonder whether they had swapped one Tory government for another.

What the punters think



Today's speech

There will be the odd nod to reassure the membership that they have not wasted their rail fares to Blackpool, with boasts of the attack on hospital waiting lists, the vaccine for meningitis, and the new crackdown on minor criminals. But Blair will be looking way

beyond the Winter Gardens to measure converts to New Labour, who are fearful of recession, that he is still taking the middle way. Reception will be less euphoric than last year as daily announcements of job losses take their toll.

Prospects

They may not love him, but his command over Labour's supreme. As the economic downturn bites, and Labour MPs fear for their seats, expect to see a few more visits to the Commons tea rooms and an

increase in his abysmal Commons voting record. But with Tory divisions greater than ever there's little chance of the Blair being evicted from Downing Street until well into the new millennium.

...also today Frank Field and Alistair Darling look horns at

Darling hints at tougher disability benefit test

Lucy Ward
Political Correspondent

ALISTAIR Darling yesterday used his first conference speech as Social Security Secretary to signal tougher tests for disability benefits.

His reference to "reform of the complex system of disability benefits where the emphasis will be on capacity, not just on incapacity" was interpreted by disability campaigners as a hint that the All Work Test, which many of the 2.4 million claimants of incapacity benefit are required to pass, would become tougher.

On pensions reform, he said the basic state pension would remain the foundation of retirement provision, but "that alone is not enough". There are too many people who can save for their retirement who are not saving and who need to save more."

But Baroness Castle launched an assault on the Chancellor, Gordon Brown, for "pursuing his own private agenda over pensions", while the pensions minister, John Denham, was given a rough ride over the slow pace of reform at a packed fringe meeting.

Lady Castle called for the state scheme to be invigorated through an expanded National Insurance system and restored link with earnings, and appealed for dignity for the poorest pensioners, many of whom preferred not to claim extra state help rather than face a means test.

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Labour

Benjamin Netanyahu shakes hands with Madeleine Albright as Yasser Arafat, right, looks on. Their meeting in New York on Sunday capped a weekend of intensive diplomacy but there was little movement on Middle East peace



Middle East summit stalls

Julian Borger in Washington

PRESIDENT Bill Clinton claimed to have made progress at a Middle East peace summit at the White House yesterday, but could not clinch agreement on Israeli troop withdrawals from the West Bank.

The White House had asked for a three-way meeting involving the embattled American president, apparently to show that his foreign policy leadership has not been crippled by sexual scandal.

But after 100 minutes of talks with the Israeli prime minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, Yasser Arafat, there was little sign of ending the 18 months of deadlock in the Oslo peace process.

President Clinton concluded the summit on the most optimistic note possible, saying: "I believe that we all

agreed that there was a significant narrowing of the gaps between the two parties across a wide range of issues that were in the American initiative that we have been working on for months."

But he admitted: "I think, also — to be candid — there is still a substantial amount of work to be done before a comprehensive agreement can be reached."

Mr Clinton did not give details of the remaining obstacles to an agreement on the US initiative, first floated in January, which involves Israeli withdrawing its troops from 13 per cent of the West Bank in three phased moves, contingent on the Palestinian making progress in suppressing Islamic militant groups.

In an attempt to squeeze out enough progress to justify the White House summit, the US secretary of state, Madeleine Albright, met the Israeli and Palestinian leaders late on Saturday night and then again on Sunday evening, the

latter session in a lasting until the early hours of yesterday.

The meeting was a marked departure from the recent White House policy of aloofness, under which the two sides were told that the president would become involved until a qualitative breakthrough had been achieved.

But an agreement appeared far from imminent yesterday. President Clinton said he had asked both leaders to return

to Washington in the middle of next month to resume the discussions. Mrs Albright will go to Israel in the next few days, along with the special envoy, Dennis Ross, to try to improve the chances of success next month.

The Israeli far right was sufficiently alarmed by the prospect of a White House encounter between Mr Netanyahu and Mr Arafat to send two of its leaders to the US on Sunday night in an attempt to forestall any further transfer

of land to the Palestinians. But Mr Netanyahu assured settlers that any new agreement would not include a freeze on the growth of Jewish enclaves in the occupied territories.

In a television interview on Sunday night, Mr Netanyahu listed the undertakings he said the Palestinians had not yet fulfilled.

"They have said that they would dismantle the infrastructure of terrorists, that they would arrest the leading

terrorists, that they would collect illegal weapons, that they would adjust the size of their police force to the agreed-upon levels under the Oslo accords. They also said they would cancel or revoke their charter ... calling for Israel's destruction."

Palestinian officials insisted yesterday that they had fulfilled their promise to clamp down on Islamic fundamentalism, and had long ago deleted paragraphs in the Palestinian Covenant hostile to Israel's existence.

Mr Arafat has said that if there is no significant progress in implementing the Oslo peace accords by May, (the formal end of the transition period envisaged in the accords) he will have no choice but to declare Palestinian statehood unilaterally.

Denouncing the threat on Sunday evening, Mr Netanyahu said: "We could each decide unilaterally what we each want, and we would have an explosion."

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News in brief

Congo ups stakes by bombing Uganda

CONGOLESE planes dropped bombs just inside Uganda's western border on Sunday, a senior intelligence source said yesterday. No one was killed, but the raid appeared to mark an escalation in hostility between the countries.

Uganda has troops in Congo and backs the rebels fighting its president, Laurent Kabila. The source played down the incident, but said: "With these attacks Kabila hopes to give the impression he has the capacity to bring the war nearer Uganda."

Mr Kabila accuses Uganda and Rwanda of supporting the rebels who have been fighting to overthrow his government since the beginning of last month. Both deny the accusation, but the Ugandan president, Yoweri Museveni, said earlier this month that he had troops in eastern Congo to avoid a possible genocide of ethnic Tutsis and to prevent Ugandan rebels attacking his country. — Reuters, Kampala.

Plan to pardon prisoners

RUSSIA'S justice ministry said yesterday it was planning to give about 115,000 prisoners amnesty to ease the chronic overcrowding in the cash-strapped jails. The proposed amnesty, due to take effect by the end of the year, would not apply to those on serious charges such as murder, but was expected to cover some awaiting trial in the notorious detention centres.

The plan has been sent to other state departments, including the interior ministry and the prosecutor's office, for approval, RIA news agency reported. Last year Russia granted amnesty to about 35,000 prisoners among the estimated one million people held in jails and labour camps. — Reuters, Moscow.

Liberian fugitive moved on

THE leader of Liberia's ethnic Krahn militia, Roosevelt Johnson, has been flown to Nigeria after his evacuation last week from the American embassy in Monrovia to Sierra Leone, witnesses in Freetown said yesterday.

Mr Johnson, who sought refuge at the embassy the weekend before last during bloody clashes between his supporters and the forces of President Charles Taylor, was flown out of Liberia by the US on Friday, ending a tense stand-off. Diplomats say as many as 350 people may have been killed in the security crackdown and related clashes. The US state department said Mr Johnson, one of Mr Taylor's enemies in a seven-year civil war which ended with multi-party elections last year, would go on to an unspecified third country in west Africa. — Reuters, Freetown.

Seoul prepares for strike

SOUTH KOREA faced an indefinite strike by 36,000 bank staff today after the government failed to revive talks late yesterday. The proposed strike at nine commercial banks has been declared illegal by the government, and police occupied the banks' headquarters to stop union officials preparing for a rally.

"We cannot resume talks under the current situation," said Han Sang-bum, a spokesman for the unions. "Unless police withdraw from the headquarters of the nine banks, we cannot sit at the negotiation table."

The union is protesting at plans for large-scale dismissals after the banks were ordered to get rid of redundant workers as part of the country's financial restructuring. — Reuters, Seoul.

'Auschwitz cross' priest quits

A PRIEST in northern Poland who last month defied calls by Roman Catholic leaders not to put up crosses close to the former Nazi death camp Auschwitz has resigned from his parish.

Church officials said yesterday that the Rev Ryszard Krol's decision was mainly due to his deteriorating health, adding that he had shown signs of depression for some time.

Fr Krol's cross, planted by his parishioners in the village of Kępcze, 250 miles north-west of Warsaw, joined 200 others placed by conservative Catholics in support of a 26ft wooden cross erected 10 years ago by Carmelite nuns on the site where 150 Poles were killed by the Nazis in 1941. That cross has been criticised by Jewish groups for disturbing the memory of the more than 1 million Jews killed at Auschwitz. — AP, Warsaw.

Yeltsin shuffles the chairs as Russia goes on sinking

Tom Whittehouse in Moscow

THE NEW Russian government's game of musical chairs continued yesterday with President Yeltsin dismissing two ministers, appointing another, and leaving 10 ministerial posts vacant.

Despite a warning from the International Monetary Fund that loans to Russia will be suspended unless the drift to economic anarchy is ended, there is no telling when the music — now playing for 17 days — will stop.

The outgoing ministers are Boris Fyodorov, dismissed as tax chief, and Viktor Khristenko, who was economics minister. Both were regarded as reformist counterweights to leftwingers brought in by the new prime minister, Yevgeny Primakov.

Mr Fyodorov is respected by the international financial community for opposing central bank proposals to revive the economy by printing roubles.

But the confirmation of Farit Gazizulin as privatisation minister does not suggest a further shift to the left. Having worked closely with the previous privatisation team, he is considered a reformer.

The latest government tinkering confirms Mr Primakov's inability to reach an agreed economic policy. Like its predecessors, this government is hopelessly divided into conservatives and radicals.

Martin Gilman, head of the IMF's Moscow office, said yesterday that personalities were less important than policies, and once again called on Russia to cut spending and raise tax collection.

"This problem has been going on for so long that Russia can no longer borrow, and that has led to its payments crisis," he told Moscow radio.

The Sevodnya newspaper reported last week that a Russian Far East army garrison was preparing to block the Trans-Siberian railway with tanks to demand back pay.

The IMF was to disburse \$4.3 billion to the Russian government this month as part of the \$22.6 billion emergency credit package it agreed in July. But until Mr Primakov's economic policies become clear, it says, no money will be forthcoming.

Russia's representative at the talks with international creditors, Alexander Shok-

hin, resigned on Friday after nine days in the job. A centrist, he complained that he had been appointed as "window dressing".

He also cited the re-appointment of Mikhail Zadornov — the previous government's finance minister, who let the rouble devalue and declared a default on foreign debt — as a reason for his resignation. But insider knowledge of the true extent of Russia's economic plight may also have persuaded him to jump before the ship sinks.

The new economics minister, Andrei Shapovalov, meets Western leaders at a G7 meeting in London today. He will almost certainly hear the same message as the IMF gave yesterday — no more Western credits without a radical change in Russian economic policy.

But pressure to abandon any pretence of fiscal rectitude is mounting. Under the headline "Army Ready for War — Civil War," the Sevodnya newspaper reported on Saturday that a Russian Far East army garrison was preparing to block the Trans-Siberian railway with tanks to demand back pay.

In response, Mr Primakov told Mr Yeltsin yesterday that the backlog of military wages would be cleared immediately. Students would also be paid their overdue grants. But without fresh IMF funds, it is difficult to see how he can do this without printing money.



Confucian scholars wearing their traditional mortarboards stand to attention in the rain outside Taipei's Confucian temple yesterday. They were celebrating the annual Teachers' Day, the day the philosopher was born in 551BC

Defeated Meciar leaves Slovakia in limbo

Robin Shepherd in Bratislava

SLOVAKIA'S strongman Vladimir Meciar, whose government lost its majority in the weekend general election, has made no public comment on the setback — and not even his party workers know where he is.

Four opposition parties with a huge combined majority have promised to form a government, and all of them reject any suggestion of working with Mr Meciar. Analysts said he might be finding it difficult to come to terms with what has happened.

"In this crucial situation for his party he is away," suggested Professor Miroslav Kusy of the Comenius Univer-

sity in Bratislava. "It is similar to Stalin in the second world war. He is not able to accept this debacle. It is the psychology of these kind of people."

Mr Meciar's post-electoral role is particularly important, because for months now Slovakia's divided parliament has failed to elect a head of state. In the absence of a president, Mr Meciar, as the prime minister, acquired important stand-in powers, including the right to recall parliament, which he must do within 30 days.

The opposition has called on him to move swiftly now so that they can form a new government without unnecessary delay.

"We have asked the stand-

in president to call a session of parliament as soon as possible. We are using every opportunity to conduct bilateral and multilateral talks to form a government," said Mikulas Durinda, leader of the Slovak Democratic Coalition (SDK), the largest opposition party.

Although Mr Meciar has said nothing, a senior colleague in the Movement for a Democratic Slovakia (HZDS) said yesterday that the party had yet to decide whether to try to keep power by striking an alliance with another party.

If the opposition parties are as good as their word, HZDS has no chance of luring any of them into an alliance. — Reuters.

Le Pen appeals in court against ban on political rights activity

AP in Versailles

THE National Front leader, Jean-Marie Le Pen, began his appeal yesterday against a two-year ban on political activity imposed for physically attacking a Socialist politician. The hearing at the appeals court in Versailles, south of Paris, was expected to last two days.

Dozens of supporters, some holding banners reading "Justice for Le Pen", and many opponents of the National Front stood outside the court. The presiding judge warned that he would not tolerate any disturbances.

Mr Le Pen, aged 70, was

convicted for attacking Annette Peulvast-Bergeal on 30 May 1997 in the town of Mantel-La-Jolie, west of Paris, where she was campaigning for a seat in the national assembly. He was lending his daughter, Marie-Caroline, support in her bid for a seat.

The court stripped Mr Le Pen of his civil rights for two years, in effect banning him from holding office, running for office, or voting in that time. He was fined 20,000 FF (\$2,200).

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Schröder vows to get the country to work

Policy The new chancellor has hinted at bold steps to tackle unemployment, but remains cautious on social policies. Ian Traynor in Bonn reports

GERMANS woke up yesterday, pinched themselves on the cheek, and realised they had just done something they had never done before: dumped a national leader at a general election and conferred a sweeping mandate for change on a new generation of the centre-left. What have they let themselves in for?

As the chancellor-elect, Gerhard Schröder, confidently unveiled his plans for the first national government of Social Democrats and Greens, he stressed that the three fundamental pillars of his administration would be economic stability, law and order, and foreign policy continuity.

On the key domestic issues of the labour market, social security and pension reforms — the toughest tasks confronting his government — he refused to be pinned down.

The Greens leaders and the



Workers add the slogan 'Germany has a new chancellor' to a poster of Gerhard Schröder in Bonn yesterday

PHOTOGRAPH: DIETHER ENDUCHER

neo-liberal cheerleader, have been scathing about the new government's prospects.

But Mr. Schröder was among the first to penetrate the Schröder inner circle at the post-election party on Sunday night.

Mr. Schröder insisted yesterday that Jost Stollmann, a

the new government.

Mr. Lafontaine, tipped to be finance minister, called yesterday for interest rates cuts throughout Europe to boost jobs and banish the fear of a global recession. Already, it seems, he may be heading for a clash with the independent Bundesbank and the embry-

Green, who is tipped to be the next foreign minister, attempted to assuage fears of a radical departure in foreign policy.

"There will be no unilateral German withdrawal from Nato," Mr. Fischer said.

"Germany is a Nato member and will remain a Nato member," Mr. Schröder said.

But if the big picture does not change, the details could. On the pressing matter of possible Western military intervention in the Serbian province of Kosovo, Mr. Schröder criticised the interventionist stance of Volker Rühe, the outgoing defence minister, and insisted that a United Nations Security Council mandate would be needed for Nato action.

The basic pillars of his administration will be economic stability, law and order and foreign policy continuity

young non-party entrepreneur and unabashed fan of American-style capitalism who recently described the German social security system as a "prison" for employees, would be in his cabinet, although he is despised by the SPD party faithful.

Economic policy and curbing unemployment will be the toughest and biggest test of

the new government.

The new government wants to reform the unwieldy tax system and cut income tax, particularly for low earners, by an overall £3.5 billion, leaving the average family £1,000 a year better off.

Given the huge foreign media presence in Bonn this week, both Mr. Schröder and Joschka Fischer, the leading

Green, who is tipped to be the next foreign minister, attempted to assuage fears of a radical departure in foreign policy.

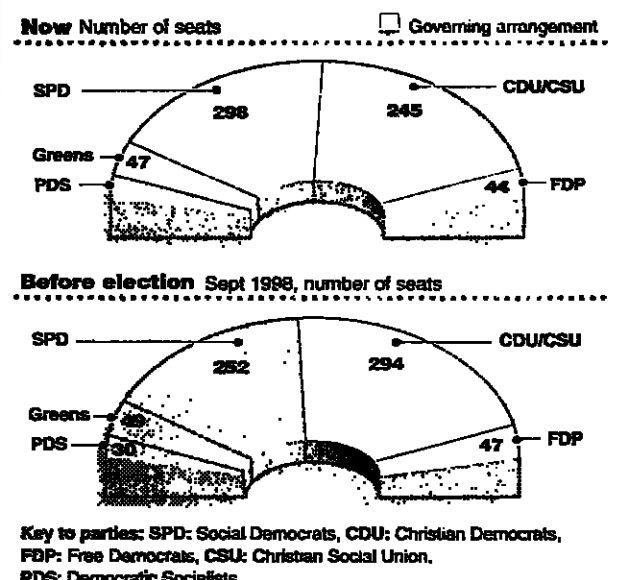
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The one issue on which the SPD and the Greens should be able to move quickly is immigration and the reform of the 19th century citizenship laws, which are seen by liberals as anachronistic and implicitly

Bundestag seats



Greens face up to the challenge of sharing power

Radical party Denis Staunton in Berlin examines the influence that the proposed junior party in Schröder's coalition can hope to have in reshaping Germany

GERHARD Schröder's decision yesterday to open coalition talks with the Greens is the latest stage in a remarkable political journey for the party that began as a loose collection of radicals and ecological enthusiasts.

Many of Mr. Schröder's colleagues in the Social Democratic Party (SPD) would have preferred an alliance with the defeated Christian Democrats to a partnership with idealists who put principles before popularity.

For their part, the Greens are united in their eagerness to share power.

But the negotiations will not be easy, not least because both parties will be determined to avoid future arguments by agreeing as much as possible in advance. Experience in those federal states where the SPD shares power with the Greens has shown that disagreements deferred can lead to the collapse of coalitions.

Neither side has laid down strict preconditions, but the broad lines of the Greens' demands are clear.

The Greens were founded in 1983 primarily as an anti-nuclear movement, and the party is determined to close down all Germany's nuclear power stations.

The SPD shares this aim but insists it could take decades to realise.

The SPD chairman, Oskar Lafontaine, said on Sunday night that a compromise was possible, perhaps involving the closure of each nuclear installation as its operating contract expires.

For their part, the SPD sees its primary task as fighting unemployment, and it will resist any Green proposals that threaten jobs, including a Green plan to triple the price of petrol within 10 years. But the SPD will consider introducing "green taxes" to reward the environmentally virtuous and punish polluters.

A Green plan to redistribute work, based on shorter hours and less overtime, could meet resistance from the SPD's trade unionist wing, as would a proposed ban on state subsidies for "ecologically useless" industry.

Both sides agree that Germany's antiquated citizenship laws should be changed to allow all children born in Germany to become citizens and to make it easier for foreign residents to adopt German citizenship. The new government can also be expected to take tougher action against racist thugs

who terrorise foreigners.

Women can expect a fairer deal under a government with Green participation, and Germany could become the first major European country to end discrimination against same-sex partnerships by putting gay couples on an equal footing with those who are married.

The Greens can expect three ministries, among them the foreign ministry, which is expected to go to their parliamentary leader, Joschka Fischer.

Mr. Fischer declined to speculate on his future yesterday but insisted that Germany's allies had nothing to fear from the Greens.

He is an enthusiastic European who supports Germany's membership of Nato and the participation of Bundeswehr soldiers in United Nations peace-keeping missions. But his appointment as foreign minister could make Germany a tougher defender of human rights throughout the world.

Other Green leader who can expect a ministerial post is Jürgen Trittin, who enjoyed a good relationship with Mr. Schröder as a member of his cabinet in Lower Saxony. Although frequently characterised by the German media as a fundamentalist, Mr. Trittin is in fact among the most realistic and power-orientated within the party.

Controversial remarks such as his comparison of Bundeswehr swearing-in ceremonies with Nazi rituals are guaranteed to win hostile headlines in the conservative press but they are popular with party activists.

Realist leader Joschka Fischer, who may be foreign minister in the new government, is seen by many Germans as the acceptable face of the Greens



Joschka Fischer faces the press yesterday as his party prepares to enter government

JOSCHKA FISCHER looked a little embarrassed as he struggled to answer a reporter's question in English, turning to a colleague next to him for help, writes Denis Staunton in Berlin.

"As you can see, I need some practice," he said.

If this week's coalition negotiations between the Social Democrats and the Greens are successful, Mr. Fischer will become vice-chancellor and Germany's first Green foreign minister.

The prospect of a representative of a pacifist, anti-nuclear party shaping the foreign policy of Europe's most powerful nation is enough to send shivers running down many spines in Washington. But if the foreign ministry has to go to a Green, most of Germany's neighbours will be pleased to see it allocated to Mr. Fischer.

At 50, this self-educated butcher's son and former taxi driver is one of Germany's most popular politicians, respected by opponents such as Helmut Kohl and the former foreign minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher. For many Germans, he is the acceptable face of the Greens, who talk sense about making development ecologically sustainable and turning Germany into a more open, liberal society.

The collapse of his marriage two years ago prompted Mr. Fischer to undergo a personal process of reform, giving up alcohol and transforming himself

from one of Germany's portliest politicians into today's slender ascetic. He jogs seven miles every morning and when his party colleagues were celebrating their victory on Sunday with sparkling wine, he stuck to water.

Now he wants to reform the Greens, replacing the present loose confederation of regional parties with a national party structure. His changes are aimed at making the party more efficient and protecting the leadership from grass-roots ambushes while broadening its appeal.

As the man responsible for much of the Greens' success in recent years, Mr. Fischer was frustrated earlier this year when a 12 per cent popularity rating was cut in half overnight after a party conference in Magdeburg. Delegates insisted on including in their election manifesto proposals to triple the price of petrol within 10 years, to halve the number of soldiers in the Bundeswehr and to dissolve Nato.

If Mr. Fischer becomes foreign minister he can expect further clashes with the membership over Nato, disarmament, human rights and the arms trade. His strength in negotiations with his own party lies in the fact that he is indispensable and his departure from politics would spell the end of the Green experiment with power.

But, although he is a realist, he remains attached to his ideological roots and can be depended on to defend fundamental Green principles. He may even succeed in devising an ethical foreign policy encouraging European Union member states to share resources with poorer countries in the southern hemisphere. His first test will come when Germany takes over the EU presidency in January 1999.

Dynamic leadership will set the course for the EU in the post-Kohl era and determine whether the centre-left promise to bring Europe closer to its citizens can be realised.

Europe's leftward turn is now complete

Beneath the broad alliance, writes Martin Walker, are threatening differences

THE Social Democrat win in the German elections is part of a sweeping, transnational shift. For the first time Europe's four leading countries all have left-of-centre governments.

Suddenly it is no longer hollow to talk of a European public opinion, even a European politics. In France, Italy, Britain and now Germany, the voters have chosen social democrats who may be reconciled to free market economies but reject the societies they produce.

Beyond Germany's change of chancellors and political generations, beyond the prospect of London making a tri-

angle of the Paris-Bonn axis, the outstanding indication of the German elections is that Europe is no longer prepared to tolerate mass unemployment.

There are more than 4 million people out of work in Germany, and unemployment was always going to loom large in the election. But the issue was given a new edge of anxiety by growing evidence that the brave new global economy was not the panacea that free marketers had promised. As Europe's main exporter, Germany has felt the impact of the global financial downturn more keenly than most.

So the first place to watch,

if this shift to the left is to mean something, will be this weekend's meeting of the International Monetary Fund and World Bank in Washington. Britain and France are pressing for major reforms, and Germany, under new management, seems ready to join them.

Mr. Blair and the French prime minister, Lionel Jospin, both demand a fundamental re-ordering of the world's financial management system. The French also see a chance to establish a formal co-dominion of the dollar and the euro. Under Mr. Kohl, the Germans opposed this, under Mr. Schröder, they will be more sympathetic.

There is a sub-plot to all this which involves Europe's new spectator sport: watching for signs of rivalry between London and Paris as they woo the new German government.

The French fear for the future of the Franco-German axis, the traditional locomotive of Europe. A spirited exchange of articles in Le Monde between former French president Valéry Giscard d'Estaing and Mr. Schröder before the election suggested that the Germans plan to include London.

But this is complicated by the fact that Mr. Schröder will not govern alone. It is not yet clear how far he will adapt to the rising vote for the Greens and the ex-communist PDS, which won significant votes outside its old east German heartland. And nobody yet knows whether the Social

Democrat party leader, Oskar Lafontaine, a friend and admirer of Mr. Jospin, will challenge Mr. Schröder's Anglo-Saxon instincts.

Like Mr. Blair, Mr. Jospin and Bill Clinton, Mr. Schröder has his emotional roots in the psychodramas of 1988 rather than in the second world war or the anti-Communist simplicities of the early cold war.

Mr. Kohl was the last of the elder statesmen in power; the last of the 1960s trio of cold warriors that included Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan; the last of the German leaders to have personal memories of the Third Reich and its defeat. The foreign policy of this new government — which may be represented by a Green foreign minister — will be important.

Germany will be a crucial player in the drafting of Nato's

new strategic doctrine, which will define how far the alliance is prepared to be the peace-keeper outside its usual borders — starting with Kosovo.

Like Mr. Blair, Mr. Schröder claims to be a reborn Atlanticist. He has forgotten his 1970s attacks on Nato and his 1980s support for the German peace movement. He is now a committed supporter of Nato, and, like Mr. Blair, believes in a free-trade zone between the US and the EU — something the French oppose.

The real drama will involve conflict between London and Paris and the question of whether their new rivalry for Mr. Schröder's affections can be submerged into a broader centre-left solidarity. Along with unemployment, soothing the potential Anglo-French tension could be Mr. Schröder's biggest challenge.

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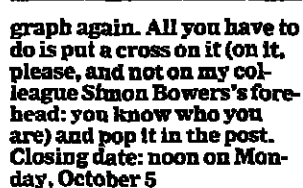
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Matthew Norman

THE postbag for our Spot the Stain competition bulges. Thanks to all who have entered so far. The Monica dress is now with my friend Michael Winner, who has marked it (with a pin) and placed it in his safe. For anyone who missed it, here is the photo-



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CLAD THINGS

Blair reaches the apotheosis of his communitarian incrementalism

How Schröder will now perform is a mystery. Apart from the uncertain shading-down of any new coalition, there's the matter of his lack of commitments. He made hardly a single promise that can be held against him when he takes office. He may bring more jobs, heat the rifts with the east, boost the rearmament of Germany at a faster pace than Helmut Kohl attempted. This was all pathetically acceptable. But there's no sign of his reduction of school class-sizes or the improvement of the crime-rate. The pocket promise-card the SPD picked from New Labour contains six bullet-points of waffle. From a Blair perspective, there's nothing to see here. This is *Thatcher*. *Thatcher* was right, while *Major* is the learned professor, Gerhard Schröder, with his rootless ideas and his four wives, looks more like the chancer.

Nonetheless, they think he will try to do better than they are probably right. A progressive rather than a conservative perspective is brought to the awesome task of rescuing world capitalism from incipient breakdown. A very different perspective is brought to the task of rescuing the world from a new diplomatic challenge presents itself, with a Chancellor sowedly committed, so he once said, to qualifying (extending? enriching?) Franco-German hegemony in the world. The world from London. How Paris seeks to preempt this historic shift, often mocked but never sustained, will be one of the choices facing Schröder in the coming year. The winning offer and Blair darts to seize it. For Blair himself, the prospect of doing progressive business with the two men most important to his future lies ahead. He and Schröder, the Atlantic, an appeals of the communitarian

incrementalism he believes the people now want from political leaders everywhere.

Yet this isn't the only model of leadership, and Helmut Kohl, even as he departs, asks a question about it. Kohl often has been called a "strong man," and many years he had no particle of charisma. There was something ineffably clerk-like about as untelevisual a figure as ever made it to the top. He was the man the focus-groups would have rejected on sight.

But Kohl was also one of the lowest common denominators that was not available to him and he did not seek to satisfy it.

Instead, he embarked on two great projects that were carried entirely by his boldness. Reunifying Germany required the forging of a visionary relationship, especially with Gorbachev, and was opposed by the obtuseness of Margaret Thatcher in our shameful name. Germans, too, regarded unity with caution. Emotion and idealism were not his headstrong the other, yet their leader had developed sufficiently massive authority to drag them in the historic direction they did not at first want to go. His donation of the Deutsche Mark to the new Germany is still disputed, and the cost of East to West was stratospheric. But no one now doubts that, in the hour that counted, Kohl was right and his courage was exemplary.

EQUALITY to his credit is the euro, the monetary project he drove forward as the natural reinforcer both of the single market and of the very idea of European Union. Without Kohl it would never have happened. The Europeans would never have settled their doubts, the Germans would never have ditched the mark. This, too, was a case of the leader coun-

mitting his own judgment and intellect, before going out to persuade a reluctant public that he was right. When he began, no opinion poll on earth would have given a chance to either of his proposals. But his arguments were inextricably real.

It is such a *style anachronism* to Third Way politics? Mist! Blairism, not to mention Socialism, exist in a world of differences that are split and opinion polls appease the masses. But to go back to some justice, to the risks he took with the Labour Party, now yielding this year's efficient and rabble-free conference, as evidence that he hasn't sought easy popularity. For his past recent history, he has followed his own path on the *stage of opinion* — "that is definitely the way the world is going..." "there's a long-term trend away from higher personal tax..." — rather than the need to change it, as the case for his unadventurous positioning on several issues.

If Kohl had been elected for a fifth term, that might have fatally wounded the Third Way. But Schröder displaced him. He has been the beneficiary of any meaningful convictions at all. It was a victory for mood, and the desire for change — as long as no change looked like a threat to anyone. This was quite like the basis for the election of Clinton after a great victory in May 1997, only to transcend it by more meaningful change than most people expected. The question, though, remains, and will remain, whether the two big companies of social democratic togetherness inaugurated at the weekend. It has its most urgent bearing on the matter of Europe. Will Tony Blair, the man who has been the most ripe to emulate Helmut Kohl?

tory but they are part of a very British attitude towards the disorderly poor. The aim is to drive a wedge between those who are prepared to be helped and the dangerous residuum beyond the reach of public help. The message is ringing and undensoury: *This government is every bit as preoccupied with the antisocial yob as the Tories. New Labour wants to teach them citizenship, returning them to the fold of civil society. But if they refuse, then they'll blow up the estates they live on.*

When proposals for dealing with "sink estates" first emerged I wondered whether, as a tidy conclusion to the business, the Government was promising to sweep up the antisocial yob. For live with a persistent rethor, which denies the humanity of such people. Tablids berate "drunken neanderthals", thugs with no sense of morality. Meanie Janies, typically, talks of "the need to prevent widespread neglect of children by both men and women, of a startling absence of the most primitive instincts of care and nurture, of young men fathering babies indiscriminately".

It is a pity that the honourable tradition. The late 19th century was a period like ours of great instability and change. Conditions were dire for the urban poor. Contemporaries described enfeebled men lying in the streets, and riotous, rioting in terrifying mobs. These antisocial elements were seen as "degenerates", their problems created by their own physical and moral deficiencies, not by the social environment. The agreed solution was to weed out those who rejected reformers' help and enforce emigration or sterilisation, leaving the respectable poor. The first of these "degenerates" were soldiers who were needed only after

sub-human prey across their sink estates would certainly add friction and give the prey a sporting chance. After all, they already know how to escape the police. It would also be a way of dealing with the blowing up their estates, the urban equivalent of gassing badgers.

The prey wouldn't actually be ripped apart by dogs. But what more dramatic and impressive way to "name and shame" the prey than social benefits would be immense. The process would warn those incorrigible single mothers to avoid yobs, breaking the vicious circle whereby crime breeds crime. Instead, these women could offer themselves

Zero tolerance zones will come down harder on the antisocial

to the many middle class men who already raise several families simultaneously without condemnation because they can afford it.

Above all this process would be good for the prey themselves and might even gain their consent. For along with their immorality and criminality, commentators always notice their unhealthiness. Yobs are obese. They are couch potato children a few years on, an American company has just announced the introduction of "fat camps" here to cope with increasingly obese children. It's already flooded with enquiries. Shame of being fat far outweighs shame of a criminal record. Why bother? If we can't recognise shared inhumanity, just let

With a little imagination Jack Straw could fix two tricky issues at a stroke

Yobs ahead. Tally ho!

Ros Coward

JACK Straw has a problem. Try as he might to offer new initiatives to deal with problem families and delinquents, some refuse all offers of redemption. So at this week's conference, if advanced leaks are correct, groundwork will be laid for two new policies: one soft, the other hard. One proposes to support families and encourage them to upgrade registrars to advise on marital counselling, naming ceremonies and family responsibilities. Adolescents on sink estates will be given mentors. The other is increasing the number of zero tolerance zones, an attempt to make Straw's tough-on-crime stance a reality by coming down hard on criminals, vandals and the anti-social.

the cage, there was full employment. With no global war threatening, Jack Straw's problem seems intractable.

However, the House might find a way to solve another tricky policy issue. The hunting season is imminent, as Roger Scruton's *On Hunting*, published last week, reminded us. The book contains embarrassing disagreements for a government trapped between two irreconcilable views. On one side are those who believe in hunting as a noble and manly and mystical right to hunt and kill others. The leadership has already shown it intends to placate this constituency even if it costs the government the support of the majority of its members. But the animal welfare lobby is just as vociferous. And if they can't tolerate a nink in a cage, now long will they endure a

But they are they are part of a very British attitude towards the disorderly poor. The aim is to drive a wedge between those who are prepared to be helped and the dangerous residuum beyond the reach of middle class help; the deserving and undeserving poor. This government is every bit as preoccupied with the antisocial job as the Tories. New Labour wants to teach them citizenship, returning them to the fold of shared values. But if that fails, then they'll blow up the estates they live on.

sub-human prey across their sink estates would certainly add frisson and give the prey a sporting chance. After all, they already know how to escape the police. It would also be more cost-effective than blowing up their estates, the urban equivalent of gassing badgers.

The prey wouldn't actually be ripped apart by dogs. But what more dramatic and impressive way to "name and shame" these yobs? The social benefits would be immense. The process would harm those

When protesters start dealing with "sink estates" first emerged I wondered whether, as a tidy conclusion to the business, the Government was proposing to blow up the inhabitants as well. For we live with a persistent rhetoric which denies the humanity of such people. Tabloids berate "drunken neanderthals", thugs with no sense of morality. Melanie Phillips, typically, talks of "social degradation, of wide-

Zero tolerance zones will come down harder on the antisocial

spread neglect of children by both men and women, of a startling absence of the most primitive instincts of care and nurture, of young men fathering babies indiscriminately".

to the many middle class men who already raise several families simultaneously without condemnation because they can

able tradition. The late 19th century was a period like ours of great instability and change. Conditions were dire for the urban poor. Contemporaries described embezzlement, lying in drink-induced stupor, or loitering in terrifying mobs. These antisocial elements were seen as "degenerates", their problems created by their own physical and moral deficiencies, not by structural underemployment. The agreed solution was to weed out those who rejected reformers' help and enforce emigration or sterilisation, leaving the respectable poor. The first world war changed everything: soldiers were needed and after

Above all this process would be good for the prey themselves and might even gain their consent. For along with their immorality and criminality, commentators always notice their intelligence. Yobs are obese. They are couch potato children a few years on. Slobbist and indolent. An American company has just announced the introduction of "Genpup" here to cope with increasingly obese children. It's already flooded with enquiries. Shame of being fat far outweighs shame of a criminal record. Why bother? If we can't recognise shared humanity, just let the hounds run amok.

Now there's more dissent in the National Executive Committee, will Blair's tame MPs also stop being such puppets?

Cutting the strings

Andrew Roth

THIS week's surprise results have introduced the possibility of dissent among Labour activists. But what of the android lump paralysing debate among the MPs? That android label stuck to 150 Helen Brinton-style super-Labour Blairites among the MPs in the Labour MPs' election in May 1997, because their idea of a probing question was "Isn't the Government wonderful for reversing 12 years of Tory misrule?" Veteran Labour MPs chorus: "Aren't they awful?"

Their super-loyalty was understandable. Many former teachers, lawyers and doctors, they had all made a career in politics and they owed their seats to Tony Blair's empathy with Middle England. Gordon

Brown's promises of no tax hikes, Millbank's rebuttal computer and the spin doctors.

And Labour leaders have made loyalty pay. When Peter Hain showed he was not about to bend the knee to a Welsh minister, while his equally talented left-Keynesian fellow-rebel, Roger Berry, was fobbed off with a place on a select committee. When it came to chairing the foreign affairs select committee, he was qualified by independent-minded Ted Rowlands, able former Foreign Office minister. But the post went to more loyal Donald Anderson.

Once-abrasive Margaret Hodge was promoted a minister, having continued to chase heresy as a loyal moderate. The best of all enemies, the former head leader of Islington's "loony left". Charles Clarke, Neil Kinnock's capable former

chief of staff, made the ministerial grade after a Machiavellian gesture. He wrote to Harriet Harman telling her he loathed her cuts in single parent benefits. But then he loyally voted for them. Labour Whips had to go out and get

Economic threats may now change new Labour MPs' loyalty calculations

drunk when they realised how successfully they had exploited the new loyalism. Only 14 of the 47 votes against the cuts came from the new MPs.

The rebels among new MPs then, and against university fees in June, came only from two sources: the classic hard left like the

mother and son Cryers, and the over-55s – elderly veterans who unexpectedly won seats on the 1997 Labour floodtide and had no career expectations.

However, economic threats to the support of the MPFs loomed large. Scores of them narrowly won part-rural seats, where farm incomes have halved and are still dropping, mainly from the inherited BSE crisis. Peter Bradley, who helped expose Shirley Porter's shenanigans, is a former group leader on Westmidshire Council, now has a tougher job as new MP for the Wrekin, redrawn as a part-rural "Tory marginal". he won by 3,000 votes. As chairman of the new 80-strong Rural Group of MPs, he is trying to keep the MPFs united, and is urging farmers on the issue of hunting. He has campaigned for a Ministry of

paid mining jobs almost overnight. Jeff Kniss, who heads the Barnsley East by-election fight, says his energy as leader of the council and the Barnsley Regeneration Forum, now-days warns the Government that the next tranche of EU regional aid will bypass areas in Britain's worst-hit areas.

There is a new wave of north-eastern industrial shut-downs. Tony Blair has warned everyone to play down the closure of Puffin in his own constituency. He knows that any special help challenges the tight-money, globally competitive policy of his own monetarist Chancellor.

But new MPs with majorities smaller than Blair's 25,000 are edging toward pump-priming the economy to save constituents' jobs and their own. Blair's puppets may be starting to cut



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Germans opt for coalition

It's a necessary change

THREE cheers for Germany. It has forthrightly decided itself ready for a period of rule by the centre-left. In these difficult times, the last thing Germany and Europe needed was a muddled coalition of the two main parties, a coalition which would have tended to inaction and passivity in domestic, European, and foreign affairs. That can now almost certainly be ruled out. Psephologists working on the results suggest tentatively that half of those who voted for the SPD actually had a grand coalition in mind. But the other half, with the Greens, would still constitute a plurality. Broadly speaking, Germans have voted for Red-Green, and as Gerhard Schröder made clear yesterday, Red-Green is what he will strive to give them. Apart from the unification election of 1990, held under special circumstances, you have to go back to the 1972 election that brought Willy Brandt to power to find a comparable shift in political mood.

The link between these elections is that Ostpolitik was central to all three. It helped win the 1972 election for Brandt, when Germans felt there had to be a way out of the worst rigours and confrontations of the Cold War. It won the 1990 election for Helmut Kohl when the nation was both awed by and grateful for his success in gathering in the eastern part of the country. And it helped lose the 1998 election for the same leader when his harking back to that achievement, and to the pushing through of monetary union which followed it, failed to

appeal to voters. They were looking at failing employment and job insecurity, and sensing that Germany and Europe have new problems before them. Modern elections notoriously offer less and less in the way of detailed policy, so it is not surprising that Germans may understand better what they have voted against this week than what they have voted for. They voted against Kohl because of his age and because the formulas he offered seemed outworn.

But the SPD policy programme published during the campaign offers limited guidance on critical matters. To say, as Schröder did in his first press conference after the results, that his first priority would be jobs is to say very little. How to strike a balance between German industry's demands for lower social costs and the powerful sense of entitlement shared in different ways by Germans in both the western and eastern parts of the country? How to solve the special problems of the eastern region? How to bring some green ideas into national politics without enraging ordinary citizens? How to maintain Germany's role in Europe when economic exigencies have already forced changes in the country's attitude to its EU contributions, to EU expansion, and to relations with countries like Turkey? These are some of the questions, of course, that are going to be argued out in the coalition negotiations that begin formally this Friday.

During these talks, the SPD will be negotiating with the Greens, but both parties will also be negotiating with themselves. In a grand coalition led by the SPD, Oskar Lafontaine would have been counterbalanced by weighty CDU men. In a Red-Green coalition he will be a powerful left-wing influence on policy. Joschka Fischer, the Green leader, who may well become foreign minister, will be another powerful figure.

Schröder will not have over such a government the dominance that Kohl enjoyed over his, and that is another development in Germany which should be welcome. Kohl's predominance was both natural, in that it was the consequence of achievement and hard work, and unnatural, in that it stifled the diversity a major party must maintain. That time, with its disadvantages and advantages, is over: a necessary change for both Germany and Europe.

Brown's way

Short-term pain, long-term gain

GORDON BROWN is an iron chancellor not just because he pursues a tight fiscal policy but also because of the way he resists the clamour for change among Labour loyalists. At Blackpool yesterday he dismissed appeals to attack unemployment more on the grounds that short-term pain was inevitable in order to achieve the goal of eliminating stop-go policies. He couldn't do anything about pay restraint in the public sector because that might risk a return to the days of boom and bust. He acknowledged the concern of industry representatives like the British Chamber of Commerce (which called yesterday for lower interest rates) but he had to avoid the boom and bust mentality that was the real threat to business.

Mr Brown said he wouldn't sacrifice his iron prudence for today's standing ovations — a promise which might have come earlier true had Tony Blair not led delegates in a short polite 'stander'. Which was more than Peter Mandelson, the fresher Trade Secretary, got after delivering a courteously received speech — parts of which would have tripped easily off the tongue of a Conservative trade secretary. Yesterday's

real applause was reserved for union leaders petitioning for more spending and resistance to the privatisation of the Post Office.

But behind the rituals of the party conference is a serious strategy in which Mr Brown's macroeconomic stability could provide the right backdrop for Mr Mandelson's plans to sprout entrepreneurs, turn inventions into profits and improve the country's skills base. When he espoused the digital revolution he sounded like Harold Wilson in his speech to conference over 30 years ago promising to apply the "white heat" of new technology. At present Mr Mandelson's plans are words. He has a better chance than his predecessors to turn them into deeds since he is the first trade secretary for ages to have the ear of Number 10 (a fact welcomed by his new department).

A more urgent question is whether the economy will sink into "stop" before the Chancellor has had time to change the long-term. As the crisis from East Asia travels around the world like a financial version of Hurricane Georges, the danger of a deeper recession draws nearer. But at least the Chancellor has something in reserve. The sharp increases in spending on health and education don't actually start until April. They were conceived as part of the long-term plan. Now they are looking like a much-needed insurance policy against the dangers of premature recession.

Mensirs

They baffle brains

TO KNOW that Sir Clive Sinclair is a leading light of British Mensa is to know everything and nothing. Being brainy, in Mensa terms, doesn't make you sensible, attractive or incapable of designing a disas-

ter on three wheels. Equally, the example of Sir Clive shows there is no handy read-across from mental agility to creativity. Bright people may be creative (Sir Clive certainly is), they may be good-looking (Carol Vorderman is also in Mensa); they may be ugly and boring. It shouldn't therefore be surprising that Mensa is as subject as any other voluntary organisation to factionalism. It has recently crumbled from a male-dominated oligarchy into a kind of squabbling anarchy.

The trouble with Mensa is that it never did much more than allow people who passed its tests to sit around and congratulate themselves. It suffered, too, by association when 11-Plus founder Sir Cyril Burt's mental testing was challenged. Lately Mensa has been struggling to re-invent itself as a modern organisation, meaning one which admits women. (As with the Marylebone Cricket Club the obvious question is begged: why on earth do clever women want to have anything to do with such a leaden outfit?) The resignation of a popular former chair, Julie Baxter, complaining of dull misogyny, suggests it has not yet succeeded.

Some took Mensa at its self-estimation because it traded on the suggestion that ability to complete a certain kind of mental test says something about capacity to think and do in the real world. But if eugenics and neo-Darwinian ideas fed the Mensa mind, the delay in admitting women suggested old Mensa men were not too keen to pool their genes. Perhaps the embarrassment in which it finds itself — and good luck to Julie Baxter in her efforts to found a rival organisation — will prove the obvious point. Of the qualities that make for attractive, functional people, intelligence (not to be confused with test-doing) is only one among several necessary attributes. They don't show up in pen and paper tests, either.

Letters to the Editor

Hurricane hits Labour Party

I AM a long-standing Labour member but do not get to meetings these days. I appreciated the opportunity to vote for the NEC by telephone. I voted mostly for what are being reported as left-wing candidates and am reassured that most other members did so as well. (Labour left humiliates leadership, September 28). I made my choice not on the basis of whether a candidate was known as left, centre or right-wing, but whether their addresses were tangible statements of what needs to be done. I did not find these particularly radical but they contrasted with the candidates whose addresses had little or no substance, many of whom were rightly not elected. Tim Blackburn, Oxford.

THE only line missing from your coverage was "It's the Guardian who won it". Denise Vickery, Blackpool.

ST KITTS — small island in the Caribbean: 85 per cent of homes damaged and over 50 per cent of the sugar crop destroyed. Dominican Republic, Haiti and Puerto Rico lose many lives and have their economies wiped out, but barely a mention of Hurricane Georges. Now Georges is affecting Florida and suddenly the hurricane is headline news (Southern US faces hurricane havoc, September 28). Judith Stober, Shepton Mallet, Somerset.

NOW a whole bunch of new buzz-words have entered the dictionary, does it mean vegetable and comfortable will be deleted since they are now pronounced vegetable as in 'TV cookery', or is it cucky, programmes, and as comfortable as in furniture advertisements? Peter O'Neill, Greenford Middles.

The right cost for drugs

JOE Collier criticises the "secrecy" of the pharmaceutical Price Regulation Scheme, under which profits of companies selling medicines to the NHS — and hence prices — are controlled (Drug prices — are controlled, September 24).

Whatever the merits and demerits of the PPRS, it is not secret. The full text of the agreement includes a detailed account of how profit is calculated. The text is publicly available; we can also provide a condensed version. Companies also publish independently audited accounts for public inspection. As with any other commercial concerns, the full details of exactly how an individual company's accounts are drawn up to arrive at a trading profit remain commercially confidential. The principles of how pharmaceutical profits are calculated are open to scrutiny in a way few other businesses can emulate. Nor are the profit targets as "generous" as Dr Collier believes — they are set at between 17 and 21 per cent return on capital, reflecting the average return of other industries.

Dr Collier also claims that companies have worked to engender a culture that drugs are the answer to illness. I cannot disagree with him. Modern medicines are a very cost-effective way of treating illness. The average cost of a medicine to the NHS is £8.67, while a week's stay in hospital is about £1,100, excluding treatment costs.

I am completely baffled by Dr Collier's assertion that for years pharmaceutical companies "were left to determine UK prescribing practice". Prescribing practice is determined by those in a best position to judge what treatment is most suitable for individual patients — doctors. Michael Bailey, President, Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry.

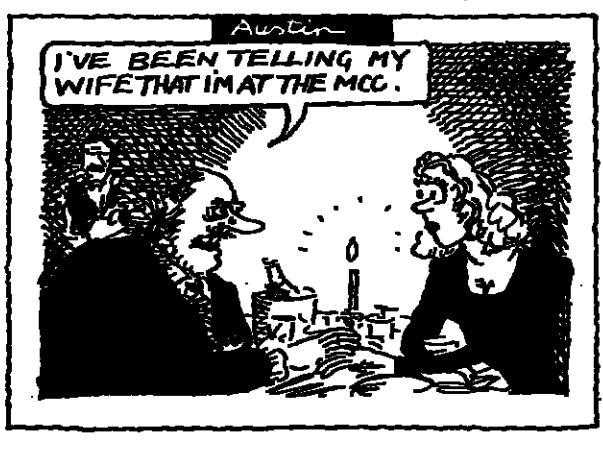
JOE Collier rejoices at the demise of the PPRS but was the final secret farewell gift to drug companies the directive making it illegal to sell aspirin in bottles of 100 any more? Earlier this year, a bottle of aspirin cost around £1 per 100. Now all chemists must sell boxes of aspirin at the new price of 80p for 32, a price increase of 300 per cent. I was told it was to prevent suicidal people from buying in bulk to bump themselves off.

Aspirin works with arthritis and is recommended to prevent strokes. The majority of people who take it for these reasons are pensioners. The elderly, often the poorest in the community, are shouldering the burden. M Wilde, Surbiton, Surrey.

GOVERNMENT sources put the Viagra bill at £1 billion whereas the drug company puts it at £50 million. Would the solution be for the company to supply all the drug needed for a fixed payment of £50 million? We might then be treated to the sight of drug reps trying to influence doctors to underprescribe. K Softley, Harpenden, Herts.

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Lib Dems waste their best chance

THE implications of the identity crisis suffered by the Liberal Democrats are far more serious than those sketched by your leader (September 25). Since the election, Paddy Ashdown and his strategists have focused almost exclusively on education, health and constitutional reform in their parliamentary performances and public appeals. Although these are long-standing Liberal Democrat priorities, Labour is now better known and supported for these policies. Paradoxically, the leadership has jettisoned the one policy area where the Liberal Democrats remained firmly ahead of Labour: the environment.

For 18 months, Mr Ashdown and the majority of Liberal Democrat MPs (Matthew Taylor and Don Foster are exceptions) have ignored many hugely relevant manifesto commitments in Parliament and public: from taxing polluters to generating badly needed jobs and improving the lives of millions of poor people through energy conservation, public transport and waste minimisation schemes.

If proportional representation comes, environmentally conscious voters will not support a party that has turned its back on the green agenda. If PR is denied, the Lib Dems will have thrown away their best chance to build a credible and distinctive alternative to Labour and the Tories. Charles Secrett, Director, Friends of the Earth.

But such research must investigate possible interactions between CS spray and the psychiatric drugs taken by many people with mental health problems. These potentially disastrous interactions should be researched in laboratories, not on people in mental distress on the streets or in their homes. Jenny Willmott, Policy Officer, Mind.

But such research must investigate possible interactions between CS spray and the psychiatric drugs taken by many people with mental health problems. These potentially disastrous interactions should be researched in laboratories, not on people in mental distress on the streets or in their homes. Jenny Willmott, Policy Officer, Mind.

Survivors offer hope for breast cancer sufferers

JULIA Darling's article (Scars and bras, G2, September 28) about breast cancer was refreshing in that she admits she hated her large breasts, and eventually had her healthy breast removed to match her mastectomy. Her experience illustrates the enormous difference in approach by different hospitals. One woman I know has been given a prophylactic double mastectomy to healthy breasts because she was considered to be at risk.

The article does, however, give the impression that all breast cancer patients have to have mastectomies. Many women nowadays (including myself) have lumpectomies, which leaves the outline more or less intact. Oddly enough, the effect of this has been to make me less self-conscious about my size and I have started buying fashionable fitted tops — I am over 60. Margaret Kelly, King's Lynn, Norfolk.

JULIA Darling's article was not about breast cancer, it was about coping with a mastectomy. Unfortunately because of the context, the overwhelming impression was that breast cancer equals mastectomy. This is not the case. Treatment for breast cancer varies depending on, among other things, the type and size of the tumour.

My cancer was treated first by a lumpectomy and removal of the lymph nodes. Then by chemotherapy and radiotherapy. My scar is unnoticeable, even in a swimsuit; I did not lose my hair during chemotherapy and I am alive. Please do not put people off seeking early help through unnecessary fear. Harriet Naden, Twickenham, Middx.

Please include a postal address, even on e-mailed letters, and a daytime telephone number. We may edit letters: shorter ones are more likely to appear.

Toothless wonder

David McKie



IF THERE can be such a thing in so decrepit a firmament, Dr Liam Fox is one of the rising stars of the Conservative Party. According to a breathless profile in Saturday's Telegraph, he doesn't just "boast" he is "into hard-core clubbing". He's "best mates" with his leader and a former beau of Natalie Imbruglia, a Neighbours' babe turned pop star. He's a proper doctor too, an obstetri-

cian, not just one of those pesky PhDs. And he's only 37, which can't be said for many in the Tory party these days. But I think I've detected a flaw. He doesn't know much about teeth. "It's nice to see so many people sucking Hooch rather than their false teeth," he was quoted the other day as saying of the new breed of younger Conservatives. This suggests a surprising ignorance of one of the most beneficial changes of the 20th century. Blue rinses, Windemoor modes, subscriptions to golf clubs and Country Life, shooting sticks and shopping trolleys on wheels, a lump in the throat when the organ swells for the singing of Rule Britannia — in many ways older Conservatives gathering for their conference in eight days' time may closely resemble those who used to cheer Churchill and Eden. But even the over-65s won't, for the most part, be wholly edentate.

In my distant youth, this certainly wasn't so. It was then a common experience as a child, creeping into the bathroom in the early morning, to be confronted with a set of false teeth grinning at you through a glass, as if on the stroke of midnight. Aunt Winifred's mouth had deserted her face and set up house on its own. It was hardly less alarming if you then bumped into Aunt Winifred, toothless and dentureless, the shape of her face fallen in, looking a good 20 years older now than when you'd last seen her at supper, making you think of death. False teeth, too, were the popular butt in those days of mildly unrespectable jokes, occupying much the same role in comedians' repertoires as oral sex or Viagra today. The decline of the denture deserves to rate along with the rise of the microwave and the washing machine and all those foreign holiday and all those

other advances picked out by focus groups as one of the great contributions to progress seen in this century.

IT'S hard to quantify, since the British Dental Association's figures go back only 30 years. But in 1968, 37 per cent of adults had lost all their natural teeth, which probably means that for over-50s the figure could have topped 50 per cent. By 1979 the overall figure was down to 29 per cent; by 1991, 17 per cent; in 2008, it's predicted, a mere 10 per cent will be wholly toothless — and this despite the fact that people are living much longer. And yet dentures had once been a boon. Dentistry — or at any rate, normally-less-than-excruciating dentistry — is a relatively new experience for all but the very rich. Anaesthetics weren't introduced till the 1840s, and for most of the 19th century it

was something of a privilege to get treatment from a qualified dentist. Before then, the usual cure was extraction, performed sometimes by barbers and often by shameless quacks. There's a fine example of one of these in Samuel Bamford's memoirs, Passages in the Life of a Radical. His friend and fellow agitator "Doctor" Healey was much in demand as a drawer of teeth, despite his cheerful incompetence. "I never liked to hear the crash of bones pulled out of living flesh," Bamford says of one of his friend's operations in around 1820. "So I walked into the yard, but had not been there a minute, ere a piercing scream called me in again, and I beheld the young woman on the floor, spluttering blood." Summoned to deal with one tooth, the "doctor" in his exuberance had managed to tear out two. Later, as they were fleeing from the constabulary, Healey could not resist stop-

ping off to carry out an extraction. He got caught while Bamford escaped. It must have seemed like progress when a dentist, using anaesthetics, could simply whip out every tooth in one's head. To the detriment, one might have supposed, of their subsequent trade, some dentists were as eager to offer "full clearance" as some doctors later became to whip out your tonsils. In days when such operations were beyond the means of many, "full clearance" was even offered to bride and groom as a wedding present, like a tablecloth or a set of saucers today. How heartening that, on a scale the world has never witnessed before, people now go to their graves with many, if not most, of the teeth they acquired in childhood. And will continue to do so, so long as we don't all adopt the practice of Captain Ashdown and take to prising bottletops off with our teeth.

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Ray Bowden

Gunner out of the West

RAY BOWDEN, who has died aged 69, won six caps for England and outlived all his contemporaries from the all-conquering Arsenal teams of the inter-war years. An inside-right or centre-forward, he was born in Looe and was one of the relatively few players from Cornwall to make a major impact on the game, bringing to it his county's serene, untroubled approach.

Like his West Country team-mate in the Arsenal attack, Cliff Bastin, he was not eager or impressed when Herbert Chapman, Arsenal's fabled manager, came to sign him, and turned him down twice. He was 25 by the time he moved to London, while Bastin had been only 17. Compactly built with dark, wavy hair, Bowden was an early perfectionist, with the habit of hopping on one leg all the way to school, then hopping all the way home on the other. The feat of scoring 10 goals in a game against Tavistock, while still only aged 15, brought him to the attention of Plymouth Argyle, whose officials persuaded him to sign up in 1926. He was eventually chosen for the Third Division South league side.

Far from this causing unalloyed delight, Bowden later reflected that he had "felt sorry about putting a married man out of a job", knowing it would signal the end of the road for the inside-forward whom he had replaced. "I'll never forget the look on his face," Bowden said.

He soon made an impact with Plymouth, a team that seemed constantly on the brink of promotion — and finally managed it in 1930. The following year, Bowden toured Canada with the Football Association party. Alto-

gether, he scored 83 goals for Plymouth Argyle. Arsenal were looking urgently for a replacement for their illustrious inside-right, David Jack. Twice Bowden, happy in the West Country, turned down offers from Chapman; no easy decision when Arsenal were so powerful and dominant, and Chapman so highly respected. But early in 1933, he finally moved to Highbury — making seven league appearances. The following season he would make 32 out of the 42 games, 24 in season 1934/5. In all three seasons, Arsenal won the championship.

His team-mate Bastin was never wholly persuaded of Bowden's virtues. In his autobiography, he wrote that Ray "was capable of being a great player on some days. On others, he was very disappointing."

PLAYING at times not only at inside-right but also at inside-left and even centre-forward, Bowden won his first cap for England against Wales in the autumn of 1934. In November, he was one of seven Arsenal men chosen to play against Italy, then the holders of the World Cup, in the torrid Battle of Highbury the following November.

Bowden, like Bastin, would later recall that he had not found the game as brutally rough as some other England players; notably the left-back Eddie Hapgood, who had his nose broken by an Italian elbow. "Mend was taken off shortly after the kick-off with a broken toe, and I think they lost their heads a bit," Bowden remembered.

Luisito Monti, Italy's ruthless centre-half, in fact broke his toe in a clash with yet an-

other Arsenal man, Ted Drake, and went off in agony claiming, "He kicked me deliberately," something Drake always denied. The Italians felt they were "retaliating".

In 1936, another injury to Ted Drake resulted in Bowden being moved to centre-forward, where he flourished in Arsenal's FA Cup run. In a tight semi-final against Grimsby Town at Huddersfield, it was he who gave the pass from which Bastin shot the winning goal.

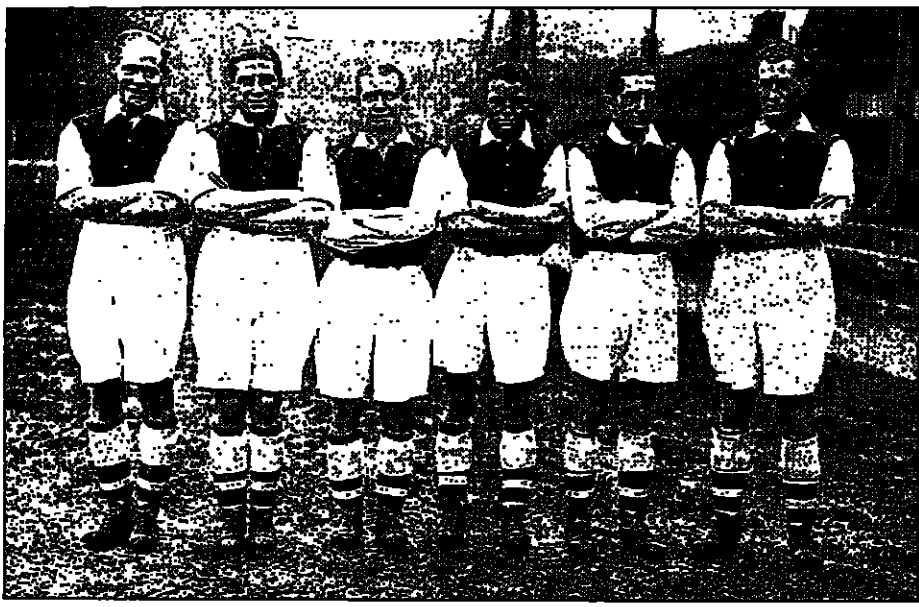
Despite Bastin's advice, George Allison, Herbert Chapman's managerial successor — restored Drake to centre-forward for the final, and he scored the winning goal against Sheffield United from Bastin's centre. With his usual calmness, Allison recorded that Arsenal did not play well, were lucky to win, while "Ray Bowden was a failure at inside-right, really not his proper position — and was very seldom in the game. One can sympathise with him, as he had been leading the Arsenal attack for a considerable period, and there is a vast amount of difference between the two positions."

Bowden scored 43 goals in 143 games for Arsenal. Eventually he was transferred to Newcastle United, and although — according to Bastin — he did not want to go, he later decided it was a fine club. He scored six goals for the north eastern side. After retiring from football, he returned to Plymouth to run a sports outfitters.

His wife predeceased him. His son and two grandchildren survive him.

Brian Glenville

Edwin Raymond Bowden, footballer, born September 13, 1909; died September 23, 1998



Golden line-up... Ray Bowden (second from right) with Arsenal team-mates in 1936

Geoff Sykes

Theatre in the north

FAR too often Geoff Sykes, who has died aged 73, stood in the shadow of his lifelong friend Michael Croft, who started the National Youth Theatre (NYT). Geoff was a superb teacher, who, with his second wife Hazel, founded and led the Manchester Youth Theatre (MYT) from 1955 to 1985.

Geoff and Croft had gone to school together, roamed the countryside in their youth, and joined the Royal Navy in 1943. After the war, Croft went to Oxford, while Geoff opted for Manchester University. They remained inextricably close, as boyishness became blokishness, and was accompanied by booze, cricket, football and then the rise of the NYT. In middle age they seemed to become each other's Falstaff, rubicund and rotund mischief-makers.

Geoff's 1960s disciples adored him — even more when he put in an on-stage appearance with the Rolling Stones. He delivered the

same induction speech for young MYT-ers for 30 years. Among the alumni Howard Davies went on to the Confederation of British Industry and the Bank of England. Mike Leigh devised and directed for Geoff in 1970 — and acknowledges his debt to the NYT, and to its founder, Michael Wood, who narrated the television account of Alexander the Great's campaigns, got his break too.

It never seemed to bother Geoff that much, that most of the glamour and kudos occurred at the London end. Why bother? Manchester knew and appreciated him. In 1985 the Manchester Evening News gave him its Horniman Award, and he and Hazel were further acknowledged in 1986 by the paper for founding the MYT.

So many men and women, not all stars and high achievers, are a little better because of him being amongst them in their youth, where they sated the salt and taste of his rugged and generous individuality. Four generations of youth theatre will remember him with love, warmth, and gratitude. He listed among his interests music, rugby, cricket, gardening, wine and whisky.

He had three children by his first wife, and one by Hazel, who survives him.

Billy Harrington

Geoffrey Sykes, teacher, born June 30, 1925; died September 24, 1998

Ben Rubner

A baritone against the bosses

IN 1964 a cabinet-maker and trade union official, Ben Rubner, who has died aged 76, flew into a war-ravaged country that few had heard of and met a former dishwasher, now that country's leader. The United States was stepping up its war in Vietnam and Ho Chi Minh had few friends in the west.

Ben and others in the delegation promised to campaign for the Vietnamese. They did, helping to sow the seeds of the anti-Vietnam war movement.

Ben was the youngest of three sons born in London's East End, brought up when it was dangerous to be a Jewish teenager in an area where Sir Oswald Mosley's fascists were most active. His father fought in the 1936 battle of Cable Street. Ben joined the Communist Party of Great Britain and was at one time a bodyguard to Harry Pollitt, its general secretary. He remained a communist all his life.

During the second world war, he served as a private (signals) in the Eighth Army in North Africa and Italy. Once demobbed he went back to cabinet-making but he never hid his political views despite being blacklisted by many employers.

He was elected a full-time

officer of the National Union of Furniture and Timber Operatives in 1958 — and never lost an election, becoming general secretary of what was by then the Furniture, Timber and Allied Trade Union in 1976. Ben was immensely popular; he was a skilled woodworker like his members, and he had battled with employers as an ordinary shop steward.

It was at this time that I got to know him well. He was one of the first union leaders in



Rubner... In 1986 during the Silentsnight dispute

the mid-1970s to warn the Labour government that its policy of pay restraint was doomed to failure. In the 1980s his union fought the Silentsnight beds dispute after hundreds of his members were summarily sacked. It became one of the longest running strikes of all time, and Ben had retired as general secretary in 1986 before it was resolved.

Ben's booming baritone voice rarely needed a microphone. This was a legacy of his youth when he performed in amateur operatics, once as the Pirate King in *Pirates of Penzance*. He was later introduced to Italian opera by his first wife, Amelia, whose family were Italian, and from whose early death in 1980 he never fully recovered. His love of opera never left him.

Ben's charm and warmth made it easy for him to make friends — including with many employers he faced across the negotiating table. His political and industrial views were always long-term and strategic. He supported what he thought was right, including the Anti-Apartheid Movement and CND.

Through a daily swimming routine, he maintained the physique of a professional athlete throughout his life. I, and many others, were proud to be his friend; he was a man of honesty and integrity. He died in Watford General Hospital — whose anti-closure campaign he supported. He leaves behind his second wife, Pat, his son, Geoff, and daughter, Susan, from his first marriage and four grandchildren.

Ken Cameron

Ben Rubner, trade unionist, born September 30, 1921; died September 21, 1998

A Country Diary

CESHIRE: Over the last three years a new feature has appeared on the local agricultural landscape — the golf course. Two features in the valley, where long-established farmhouses have either been converted into or replaced by clubhouses and the farmland itself now resembles a series of manicured lawns. Efforts have been made to retain small pockets of natural habitat, with many of the original

hedgerows and their trees left in place, with lightly-cut grass strips alongside, which should provide some haven for the wildlife that once had the freedom of the surrounding fields. A number of the old ponds have also been retained, although most have had edge vegetation severely cut back and shrub cover removed.

Despite these changes the resident moorhens have not been deterred, and judging by

the numbers to be seen early in the morning foraging on the short turf, they seem to be quite content with the new habitat. A few days ago I walked over one of these courses, following a long hawthorn hedge, which was laden with red berries, and whilst it has not been a bumper year for fruit on the brambling, red admiral, comma and peacock butterflies were fluttering around each small bush where berries had ripened.

J M THOMPSON



Two forms of ministry... Bishop Masters with Peter Mandelson at the Winchester Project in Swiss Cottage, north London, in the mid-1990s

The Rt Rev Brian Masters

People, pomp and priestly power

THE Rt Rev Brian Masters, who has died aged 66 of a thrombosis, had been at the centre of his 34 years as a priest and bishop in the Diocese of London.

A Midhurst-born farmer's son, Masters was educated at Collyer's School, Horsham, and Queen's College, Cambridge, where he read classics and law and was drawn to the Christian faith by the liberal Catholic life of Little St Mary's. As a Young Conservative, he flirted with politics, but the Suez crisis left him disillusioned and, after seven years as a Lloyd's insurance broker, he began training for ordination at Cuddesdon Theological College, Oxford.

Ordained in St Paul's Cathedral in 1964, Masters learnt the disciplined pastoral and sacramental tasks that were to be the hallmark of his ministry at St Dunstan's, Stepney. In 1969 he was appointed vicar of Holy Trinity, Hoxton. During his 13-year incumbency he flourished in a tough, backstreet parish where he could rub shoulders with villains and delight in the excesses of Catholic ritual.

In Hoxton, after his father's premature death, Masters shared his life with his mother. From that moment

she was constantly in the background, sometimes in the foreground, always at his side. For Masters, as a parish priest, the sick had a priority and he was very often the first on the scene. Later, as a bishop, he would never fail to visit both clergy and people in hospital. And when death came, he would make the conduct of a funeral his priority and preside at it with meticulous attention to detail.

When he was elected to the General Synod in 1973, Masters finally found an outlet in the Church for his political gifts. Though rarely heard on the synod floor, his energies were invested in winning the argument behind the scenes. He was as surprised as most when, in 1982, the then Bishop of London, Graham Leonard, offered him the bishopric of Fulham. But if relatively unknown outside the Anglo-Catholic circles of the Diocese of London, Masters had regularly topped the poll as chair of the Diocesan House of Clergy. Dr Leonard was looking for a card-carrying Catholic to assist him in his work; in Masters he found a partner with even more extreme views. In 1984, Leonard made him Area Bishop of Edmonton, which alarmed those with a different theological outlook. Yet his sheer hard

The ordination of women was a devastating blow

work in visiting the 100 parishes and 150 clergy in his care gradually won most hearts and minds.

In 1982 the General Synod voted to allow women's ordination into the priesthood. For Masters, it was a devastating blow. He seriously considered conversion to Roman Catholicism. But his belief in the Catholic nature of the Church of England, coupled with his pastoral concern to protect priests who could

self misunderstood his dry humour. Among the most papal of the Church of England's Catholic bishops, he regarded himself as a liberal in many matters. A high Tory and admirer of Margaret Thatcher, his heart beat for the outcast and the stranger.

And if to some at first he appeared a stiff and formal figure, those who knew him well enjoyed his quick wit. He always stole the show at the area clergy conference as the compere dressed in his Fleetwood Mac sweatshirt.

He was an able administrator, from whom correspondents could expect a one-line reply by return of post. He treated mailings to the clergy almost like election addresses, sitting up half the night to ensure nobody was overlooked and each letter personally topped and tailed.

His north London episcopate ensured he was caught up in national events. The night after the Broadwater Farm riot he was pounding the Tottenham estate. He conducted the funerals of both Cynthia Jarrett and PC Keith Blakelock. Following the King's Cross underground disaster, he was quickly on the scene visiting the injured and presiding at the memorial service.

His long stay in London

also brought him influence and advantage. On three occasions, as a member of the vacancy-in-see committee, he chose a new Bishop of London, and with the passing of years his advice and counsel became increasingly sought. He coveted his role in making appointments, which he regarded as the best way in which he could ensure the life and growth of the Church. His advice to new incumbents was always, "Leave it better than you found it."

Irritatingly early for engagements, Masters kept his clergy on their toes by always finding something in church that needed putting right. He worked hard to avoid closing churches and cutting the numbers of priests.

Masters expected an early death and few dinner parties he attended did not feature a discussion about the hymns he wanted at his funeral. The Church of England has lost a bishop who put the maintenance of his convictions and the pastoral needs of his people before the personal cost to his reputation or his health.

Nick Wheeler

The Rt Rev Brian John Masters, clergyman, born October 17, 1932; died September 23, 1998

CORRECTIONS AND CLARIFICATIONS

IN A sidebar headed, "The crucial dates in a timetable of terror, page 7, September 25, relating to the change of Iranian government policy towards Salman Rushdie, we said that in October, 1993, the Norwegian publisher of *The Satanic Verses* was shot dead. William Nygaard, head of Aschehoug (the largest publishing firm in Norway), was indeed shot in the back but survived, although seriously wounded. He has regained his health, is back at Aschehoug and continues to publish writers from all over the world.

WE PUT an ungrammatical headline on Simon Hoggart's Diary, page 12, September 26: "Let him be without sin... We should have said, 'Let him be without sin.' The correct quote from the *Bible* would be, 'He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone' (John 8:7).

IN THE FRIDAY Review, page 18, September 25, in a review of the Joni Mitchell album, *Turning the Tiger* (Reprise) we

made the singer's ex-husband, Larry Klein, a drummer, when he is, in fact, a bassist. Sorry.

PROFESSOR Struther Arnott is principal of St Andrews University (not Andrews), Birthdays, page 24, September 25.

IN THE weather panel in yesterday's paper, page 5, Saturday's Around Britain and Around the World figures, and the Night Sky in October, were omitted. Sunday's Around Britain figures were wrong. Readers wanting the correct data should write to the Readers' Editor, marking the envelope. Weather. Sorry for the chaos.

It is the policy of the Guardian to correct errors as soon as possible. Please quote date and page number. Readers may contact the office of the Readers' Editor by telephoning 0171 239 5659 between 11am and 5pm, Monday to Friday. Surface mail to Readers' Editor, The Guardian, 115, Farringdon Road, London EC1R 3EE. Fax: 0171 239 5697. E-mail: readers@guardian.co.uk

Death Notices

BELTS. Jonathan CLE, husband of Susan, died after a long illness on September 24th, aged 85. Funeral service will be held at Lymington Crematorium on Saturday October 3rd 1998 at 11.30am. Family requests no flowers. Donations to the charity of your choice.

CLARK. Frederick Stephen, of St. Albans, died peacefully on September 24th, aged 72. Good man, happy partner, loving and loved. Mourned and missed by family and friends. Humeral ceremony 11.30am, Friday 2 October, Garsington (Herts) Crematorium. Donations to Amnesty.

NICHOLSON. Julia Lewis, Christian of Brighton and formerly London, died in Rome while on holiday at St. Ignace, for many years at the City of London. She was predeceased by her husband, John, who died in 1988. She is survived by her son, John, and daughter, Jane. Funeral service will be held at St. Ignace, Brighton, on Friday 2 October at 11.30am. Donations to the Medical Foundation for the Care of the Victims of Torture, 184-186 Grays Road, London NW6 6BT. Any enquiries to 42 Temple Street, Brighton BN1 3PL.

ROCHESTER. Ernest James, 8, The Crescent, Rochester, died peacefully on September 24th, aged 85. A devoted and loving father, a devoted and loving grandfather, a devoted and loving great-grandfather. A service of mourning will be held at St. Ignace, Brighton, on Friday 2 October at 11.30am. Donations to the Medical Foundation for the Care of the Victims of Torture, 184-186 Grays Road, London NW6 6BT. Any enquiries to 42 Temple Street, Brighton BN1 3PL.

STUFFINS. John (former librarian), 26 September, died peacefully on September 24th, aged 91 years. Much loved by his family and friends. A service of mourning will be held at the Hammersmith Crematorium on Friday 2 October at 11.30am. Family flowers only please. Donations in memory may be given to Marie Curie Cancer Care, 31 Watlington, York YO1 1TZ.

Memorial Services

JEWELL. A Memorial Service for Peter Andrew Jewell, B.Sc., M.A., will be held at St. Ignace, Brighton, on Friday 2 October at 11.30am. Donations to the Medical Foundation for the Care of the Victims of Torture, 184-186 Grays Road, London NW6 6BT. Any enquiries to 42 Temple Street, Brighton BN1 3PL.

Marriages

BALL. Christopher and Frances, a service of marriage will be held at St. Ignace, Brighton, on Friday 2 October at 11.30am. Donations to the Medical Foundation for the Care of the Victims of Torture, 184-186 Grays Road, London NW6 6BT. Any enquiries to 42 Temple Street, Brighton BN1 3PL.

Birthdays

Michelangelo Antonioni, film director, 86; Gene Autry, cowboy actor, 87; Lord Avebury, Liberal peer, 70; Robert Benton, film director, 66; Richard Bonyne, conductor, 68; Sebastian Coe, athlete and former MP, 43; Colin Dexter, author, 68; Anita Ekberg, actress, 67; Prof Dorothy Emmet, philosopher, 94; Alasdair Fraser, QC, director of public prosecutions for Northern Ireland, 52; Patricia Hodge, actress, 52; Prof Rich-

ard Hodges, prehistorian, 46; Prof Reginald Jones, CH, natural philosopher, 87; Henry Keswick, banker, 60; Jimmy Knapp, trade unionist, 58; Stanley Kramer, film producer, 85; Jerry Lee Lewis, rock 'n' roller, 63; Rhodri Morgan, Labour MP, 55; Canon Paul Oestreicher, human rights campaigner, 67; Sarah Taskie, Keeper of Public Records, 53; Lech Walesa, former president of Poland, 55.

مكتبة الصالح

Analysis Welfare reform



German mood music



Frank Field: rhetorical overkill



Alistair Darling: becalmed in pensions

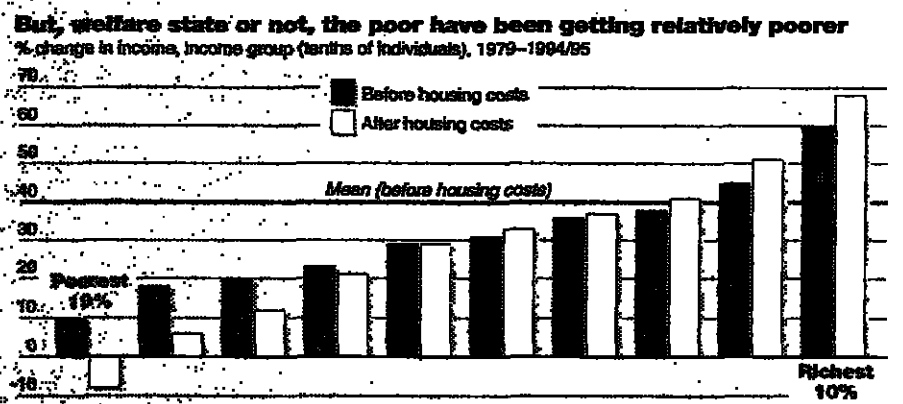
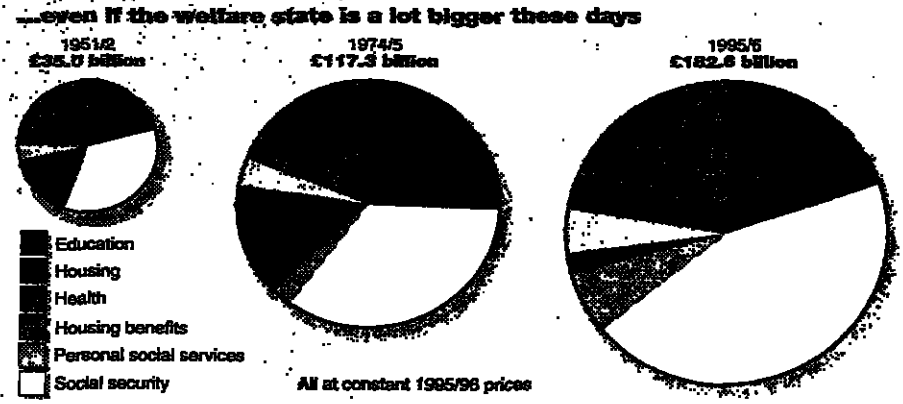
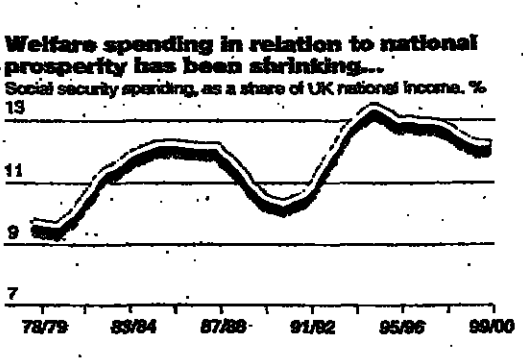
BITAIN has no welfare problem and that, as they say, is official. The Government's actuary Chris Daykin — consistent with advice ever since the welfare panic broke in the early Eighties — says it loud and clear: "Costs of running the pension system into the future are very, very manageable" (1). As for the welfare state's other limbs: spending on welfare as a proportion of national product is no greater now than in the mid 1970s. It has risen as a proportion of government spending for very good — if regrettable — reasons such as our systemic tolerance of higher unemployment. "Social security spending is not out of control, nor necessarily excessive", says Professor Steve Webb MP (2). He could have been more affirmative. Cash transfers to large numbers of fellow citizens are an essential and permanent sign that there is such a thing as society. Government provision of health and schooling is unsubstitutable and deeply valued by an unyielding majority of the population.

It's worth repeating the point. On pensions there is no coming nightmare, no great overhang of obligation, no breach in the contract between the generations. Ever since the link between pensions and earnings was broken (by the Tories) Britain's promises to pensioners have been politically doable. In low-taxing Japan, by comparison, age is a gigantic problem. If Japanese pensioners start to repatriate their huge savings, much of it squibbled away in United States Treasury bonds, there won't just be deflationary consequences for the Americans. In whom will older Japanese spend it: who is going to perform the domestic services which old people need? On the continent the ratios are similarly troubling though only last week the French began restructuring their social security system, giving the lie to doomsayers.

It's striking how welfare reform brings out cold sweat and serial exaggeration. It's not that there aren't problems (see below). It's more that this area of public policy seems to attract rhetorical overkill, of the kind favoured by the messianic Frank Field, former minister for welfare reform. Field's acquaintance with abuses in Birkenhead was real enough, but talk of "SAS-style anti-fraud" squads is over the top (3). Yet other Labour ministers, including Tony Blair, have also regularly over-promised.

In recent years welfare reform has become one of the loudest cries of the American right, transmitted here by British acolytes such as the Social Market Foundation, for which state payments to the poor are inherently suspect. But its strongest card has been the assertion that government causes bad behaviour (single parenting, for example) by promising to relieve people of the need to provide an income for themselves. The welfare (to coin a word) was sounded in the early Eighties with calls for a "new Beveridge". This mantra has been heard many times since, last week once again from Alistair Darling, sent in by Tony Blair to hose down the Department of Social Security after the excursions of Harriet Harman's tenure. "There has been no comprehensive review of the role of the welfare state in all its elements since Bev-

"Not out of control... nor excessive"



Today at Labour's conference renegade reformer Frank Field beards Alistair Darling, promoted by Tony Blair to get to grips with social security. But, **David Walker** asks, isn't there a good reason why the debate has gone off the boil? Britain's welfare state works well enough.

Fair dos

eridge." But what is the welfare state: does it include universities, mortgage tax relief and, as Sir Peter Hall (the geographer, not the theatrical impresario) would argue, a planning system that functions as a wealth maintenance scheme for property owners? Does it also encompass — as logically it ought — the capacity of the private sector to provide jobs and employment income that is above-subsistence? Calls for a new Beveridge are misplaced and not just because his 1942 report was not about "welfare" in this broad sense. His Edwardian principle of an actuarially sound contributions scheme had two notes. One was those people (the unemployed, women, intermittent workers) who were never going to be able to contribute towards, say, a pension — this is the problem which Alistair Darling is grappling with as his pensions reform slips further behind schedule. The fact of unequal market-place incomes brings means-testing, with all it implies for administration and complexity such as tapers and high marginal rates of benefit withdrawal. Like the poor, they will always be with us, says Evan Davis (4). The Government is going to tax the child benefit paid to upper earners, which will increase the marginal rates paid by those moving into the new fiscal shadow. The other Beveridge problem was work. If a capitalist economy can supply enough work for all at reasonable rates, Beveridge works; if not supplementary schemes are needed. This is the problem now facing New Labour: its New Deal stands a reason-

able chance of working as long as employment levels are buoyant; as the economy turns down, guess which category of worker and potential claimant is going to be first out? Tax credits, often touted as a panacea, only work if people have market-place income which, for example, most current recipients of housing benefit don't have.

We don't need a new Beveridge, in the sense of some over-arching scheme for income maintenance. That kind of dramatisation has been Labour's weakness. Frank Field's failure as a minister was to keep the illusion going instead of focusing on the nuts and bolts of practical policy change. Labour has, it's true, taken several of its themes from the Tories, who in turn borrowed from older socialistic ideas about rights and duties. Labour's New Deal is a kinder, gentler version of the imperative to get people off benefit into jobs except that everyone now realises that it is necessary expensive to give people the time and attention they need to get to first base, and it is government too that will have to train them and provide them with rail fares for job interviews. Labour — Harriet Harman deserves more credit for this than she got — has recognised that child care, including better play and education for pre-schoolers, is integral to the project of getting people to rely on income from employment rather than benefits. Being tough on disabled claimants who might

find jobs also means — this really would be radical — being tough on the causes of disability.

Welfare reform is a permanent condition: the system constantly needs updating to cope with changes in family life let alone the labour market. Housing benefit was introduced by the Tories to cap subsidies to councils to allow them to let property cheaply. It has succeeded in — a prime Tory intention — getting councils out of house building. But it costs. The brute facts of housing supply in Britain mean that either the state continues to subsidise rents or it moves back to supporting cheaper housing. Without housing benefit rents would fall, but what then would happen to the plan to bring more private capital into public housing? Reform is going to be difficult and long-haul and won't save money (5). Think-tankers (and civil servants) used to speculate about huge movements of people away from high demand areas (London) to Merseyside, where housing is available; but it's fantasy. Housing subsidy will have to continue at existing levels, however much improvement can be made in its administration.

Pensions, similarly. The object of policy is to ensure those arriving at retirement age have a reasonable standard of living. Either everyone saves more and it is redistributed to those arriving at retirement ill-provided or the current consumption levels of the badly off are cut in order to "force them to save". Getting the state out of the business of pensions (apparently Frank Field's

aim) won't alter the fact that large numbers of people are going to be retiring during the first three decades of the next century without adequate private provision. State outlays for the elderly will rise unless we want as a society to confront gross poverty. Means testing for old people in long term care will, necessarily, be recommended by the Royal Commission due to report later this year.

The welfare state exists because there is a collective will to keep inequality within bounds yet welfare reformers (Frank Field has changed his tune of late) rarely talk about equality. There are two reasons for this. One is that none of us, from Prime Minister down, know much about the impact of government spending on "fairness" except that cash transfers do play a significant role in narrowing differentials. Tony Blair said in 1996 that a test of his rule would be whether Britain became a fairer society. The poor did least well out of the prosperity of the Tory years. The welfare syllogism suggests the poor need more money for that extra fairness to be realised. If they can't earn it in the market place...

BUT fairness is affected by other government spending. Whitehall is anxiously poring over a new piece of research commissioned by the Department for Environment, Transport and the Regions showing just how randomly allocated is spending on health, education, policing, and all the other services. Much goes to those who have rather than those who have not (6). One implication is that the state should much more rigorous about who it is benefits from benefits.

The other reason is of course that equality goes to the heart of Labour's political personality. Does it still want to make Britain fairer? Welfare spending is a pot, says Howard Glennerster of the London School of Economics (7). The Tories screwed the lid on tightly. That's why the poor got relatively poorer. New Labour could, as he puts it, stake the fire under the pot, by trying to get more people back to work. Or it might concentrate on essential ingredients, making sure welfare is given only to the "deserving". Or it could try to set up more pots, by encouraging people to save for their old age through private pensions — though not, presumably, at the expense of huge tax reliefs. Labour is in fact trying most of these at the same time, proving that welfare reform can't be done in a single-minded "big bang" way. There is of course an alternative. Lift the lid on the pot and spend more. But that is politically risky: is more equality worth it?

Sources: (1) Financial Times, September 15, 1998; (2) The welfare state: unfinished business, New Economy, September 1998; (3) Frank Field, Making Welfare Work, Institute of Community Studies, 1995; (4) The Future of Welfare, Social Market Foundation, 1998; (5) Housing Benefit: time for reform, Joseph Rowntree Foundation July 1998; (6) Glen Bramley, Where Does Public Spending Go? DETR (summary from clarendon@det.gov.uk); (7) Howard Glennerster and John Hills (eds) The State of Welfare, Oxford University Press 1998. Graphics: Jason Pickersgill. David Walker edits Analysis.

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FinanceGuardian

US interest rate cut expected as crisis ripples from East to West

Fed to stoke up economy

Mark Tran in Washington and Mark Munn

THE US Federal Reserve is expected to cut interest rates today to help bail out a global economy battered by the worst crisis in 50 years. Financial markets are looking for a cut in American borrowing costs of up to half a point to keep the US economy — the engine of world growth — from slowing under the weight of the crises in Asia and Russia. Concerns about the health of the financial system following the multi-billion dollar rescue of the Long-Term Capital Man-

agement hedge fund and Japan's biggest corporate collapse have added to pressure on the Fed.

If the Fed does move to cut rates, it will be the first reduction in 2½ years. A cut in the federal funds rate, the rate banks charge each other on overnight loans, will send a signal to markets that America will continue to act as an economic engine to prevent global recession. Struggling Asian and Latin economies could benefit from greater American consumption of imports, and a cut in rates would also increase the availability of credit worldwide, easing the global credit crunch.

But if the Fed keeps interest rates on hold it could provoke a sharp sell-off in the world's stock exchanges and currency markets. "Everything is again looking at the interest rate decision in America," said David Brown, at Bear Stearns International.

On Wall Street, expectations of a cut in interest rates helped the Dow Jones Industrial Average to surge by more than 100 points at one stage before it slipped back slightly later in the day.

The Fed chairman, Alan Greenspan, signalled an easing of monetary policy last week when he testified before the Senate budget committee. "Deteriorating foreign econo-

mies and their spillover to domestic markets have increased the possibility that the slowdown in the growth of the American economy will be more than sufficient to hold inflation in check," he said.

Mr Greenspan's comments mark a change of direction within a few months. In July he and his colleagues were worried about tight labour markets in the US and were looking at an interest rate rise. Since the summer, the currency crisis that began in Thailand has spread across the globe to engulf Russia and now threatens Brazil and the rest of Latin America. In the latest dramatic twist to the

global economic turmoil, LTCM one of the world's most powerful hedge funds, had to be rescued from collapse.

In his testimony last week, Mr Greenspan spoke of tightening credit conditions. "Even investment-grade companies have cut back substantially on their borrowing in capital markets," he said.

A Fed cut would provide a positive start to the annual meeting of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, which will bring together finance ministers and central bankers from around the world. But Mr Greenspan has said in the last few weeks that there are no plans for a coordinated cut in

interest rates around the globe.

The election of the new German chancellor, Gerhard Schröder, had little impact on the markets, even though Mr Schröder is perceived to be less business-friendly than his predecessor, Helmut Kohl.

"At the end of the day, the US Federal Open Market Committee, Mr Greenspan, G8 pronouncements, hedge fund happenings and emerging markets are more important for Bunds (German bonds) than the results of a domestic election in one of the ultimate 'safe haven' markets," FainWebster analyst Alison Cottrell said, in a research note.

Notebook

Brown's still fit for the challenge



Alex Brummer

THE Chancellor, Gordon Brown, heads off today to the most challenging financial meetings faced by any British finance minister since Denis Healey in 1976. In Healey's day, the problem was largely domestic, with the pound falling, credit expansion ballooning and the public finances, perceived by the IMF to be out of control.

As Mr Brown pointed out in interviews and his speech to the party conference in Blackpool, the UK at present does not have these problems.

Even the Chancellor's strongest City critics would find it hard to criticise him for the changes made to the administration of monetary policy which have insulated it from the political drumbeat coming from manufacturers and trade unions.

Moreover under his stewardship the public finances have, for the time being, improved immeasurably. The reforms in financial market supervision appear to have worked reasonably well during the Long Term Capital Management debacle.

By all accounts the Bank of England, which is still responsible for systemic risk, and the Financial Services Authority have worked well together through this.

The experience of both Howard Davies as a former deputy governor and Michael Foot, now in charge of supervising large financial institutions, has been useful in ensuring that the rescue of LTCM has gone off without hitch. The unitary supervision certainly makes it easier when as many as 55 British outfits had to be contacted regarding their exposure and relationships with the American hedge fund.

Judging from his Blackpool remarks, Mr Brown is now alert to the threats out there. He described the world's financial system as being "over-exposed, over-extended, under-supervised and under-performing, and in need of far-reaching reforms".

He also made it clear, however, that despite calls for change in direction on free and open global markets through measures such as exchange controls, the role of government was "not suppressing markets".

BITISH governments know this only too well. Restrictions on foreign exchange were not enough to prevent Harold Wilson having to devalue the pound in 1967, or to stop Denis Healey going to the IMF in 1976.

Nor were heavy intervention and sky-high interest rates enough to prevent sterling being bounced out of the exchange rate mechanism in 1992, after John Major had promised to make it as good as the German mark. One had to wait for Labour for that.

Despite all this wisdom there is a caveat to Labour's policy. The Government may not be ready for a U-turn on the economy for domestic reasons, but it has to be alert to the need to adjust for international reasons.

The US central bank, the Federal Reserve, may do precisely that today when Wall Street expects it to bring down the federal funds rate.

Among the reasons it is able to do this without too much discomfort is the low level of domestic inflation, partly assisted by the emerging market crisis. The Federal Reserve is aware of its responsibilities in crisis — as in 1987 — to ease credit conditions and prevent the banking system from freezing up. Even though the budget deficit has now been resolved.

Having lived through the problem at LTCM and the other hedge funds the Bank of England must be similarly aware of the systemic risks even though the Old Lady takes the view that it is not important enough in global terms to make a difference.

Matters have started to change. At least one domestic institution, Barclays, has exposure of £200 million in emerging markets, and put up \$250 million with a further \$50 million on standby for the LTCM rescue.

The effects on Barclays Capital, the bank's investment banking arm, will be significant. It is looking at all its activities in a disciplined way and seeking to lower its exposure to emerging markets by year end.

IF OTHER banks are doing the same and going through their loan books to extricate themselves from more risky exposures, the chances are that credit will be harder to come by. In such circumstances the Bank, like the Fed, may believe it has a systemic responsibility to ease.

One of the restraining factors for some members of the monetary policy committee has been the Government's fiscal stance. Efforts have been made by the Treasury to explain why it believes that the fiscal tightening since Labour came to office — Gordon Brown referred to £20 billion in an interview yesterday — is sufficient for there to be no concern about loosening monetary policy if necessary. But there are some doubts in the City.

These were highlighted by Simon Briscoe in his just-published Economic Policy Audit for Nikko, which talks about the "massive pledges to increase public spending" and argues that claims that the Government has pursued a tough fiscal policy "are wide of the mark".

Golden Sachs also argued earlier this month that the Government will fail to meet its fiscal rules without some further modest tax increases. It warned Mr Brown against allowing discretionary increases in spending as the economy slows.

The overriding goal at present is to keep the global crisis at bay by encouraging growth overseas and bringing interest rates down at home. That might be easier had Mr Brown given himself more fiscal "wiggle" room.

Goldman millionaires go into tele-conclave over flotation

Jill Treasurer

GOLDMAN Sachs employees are likely to receive confirmation today that the private investment bank will not be floated on the US stock market this autumn.

In an address to be broadcast to Goldman's offices around the world as the markets open, Goldman's co-chairman Jon Corzine is expected to inform staff that market turbulence has forced the firm to pull the flotation — for the time being at least.

Goldman's 200 or so millionaire partners — who include Gavyn Davies, co-founder of the Labour leadership — held their monthly tele-conference last night and seemed certain to decide that they should delay their plans to sell shares to outside investors.

However, sources in the US

believe the Goldman partners will try to reschedule the flotation when market conditions have stabilised.

Some say that Goldman, one of the most respected firms on Wall Street, will be anxious not to lose face and anticipate heated debate about the merits of pulling the float at this stage.

But, many of the partners are thought to want to avoid revealing further information about the firm's current trading, given its announcement last week that earnings had fallen to \$754 million in the third quarter, from \$1 billion in the previous three months. If they proceeded with the flotation, partners would have to reveal, for instance, any losses incurred in Russia and further information on its involvement in the bail-out last week of the troubled hedge fund Long-Term Capital Management.

TOURIST RATES — BANK SELLS

Australia 2.811	Germany 2.774	Malaysia 6.38	Singapore 2.82
Austria 15.44	Greece 478.11	Netherlands 3.118	South Africa 9.87
Belgium 57.24	Hong Kong 12.78	New Zealand 3.34	Spain 234.48
Canada 2.426	India 71.59	Norway 4.64	Sweden 12.16
Cyprus 0.818	Ireland 1.883	Portugal 281.50	Switzerland 2.85
Denmark 10.80	Israel 6.46	Saudi Arabia 6.25	Turkey 481.990
Finland 8.532	Italy 2.756		USA 1.548
France 5.272			

Supplied by NatWest (excluding rupee, shilling and malawi)

Workers on board

Airline union backs survival plan

Nicholas Bannister, Chief Business Correspondent

PHILIPPINE Airlines has been offered a last-minute chance of survival following a change of heart by its biggest union over a rescue plan.

Asia's oldest airline, which owes creditors \$2.1 billion (£1.3 billion), was forced to close last week after its ground crew union refused to accept the plan.

However, President Joseph Estrada yesterday said that the country's flag carrier could be back in the air next week following a new agreement.

The president had earlier arranged for Hong Kong's Cathay Pacific airline to fill the vacuum caused by PAL's closure, which had left thousands stranded. He arrived at Manila from Cebu City yesterday aboard the first Cathay Pacific flight, which rescued grounded PAL passengers.

Philippines law prevents foreign airlines from operating domestic flights but, under the deal brokered by the president, PNB Holdings, a subsidiary of the state-controlled Philippine National Bank, leased two Cathay Pacific planes and crews.



President Estrada arrives at Manila on Cathay Pacific's first Philippines domestic flight intended to service stranded passengers PHOTOGRAPH: ROMEO RANOCO

The PAL rescue deal, announced yesterday, includes a controversial clause requiring the union to suspend its collective bargaining agreement for 10 years in return for continued union recognition and a guarantee of no cuts

in salaries or health benefits.

The decision has split the union. More than a thousand workers protested outside the union's offices, claiming that the deal violated their rights. However, President Es-

trada said: "Everybody's happy, not only me but the whole country. Finally there is an agreement."

PAL's chairman, Lucio Tan, was confident that the company's employees and management would be able to achieve "very harmoni-

ous cooperation" while union president Alex Barrientos said the deal was the last possible hope. "If this fails, it's closed," he said.

PAL's troubles have been exacerbated by the Asian currency crisis which hap-

pened shortly after the airline had launched a \$4 billion modernisation programme.

The Philippines government refused to take over PAL because it could not afford to underwrite daily losses of up to \$1 million.

Pound pushes trade deficit deep into the red

Larry Elliott Economics Editor

BRTAIN'S trade balance with the rest of the world is falling further into the red as the strength of the pound hits exports and encourages imports, according to Government figures released yesterday.

Data from the Office for National Statistics showed that the monthly deficit rose from £200 million to £300 million in July, with no sign of any improvement in August.

Only the strength of the UK's buoyant service sector — running a monthly surplus of more than £1 billion — has saved the Government from an even sharper deterioration in the trade figures.

Britain's shortfall in goods, where the problems of the high pound have been most acute, stood at £1.4 billion in July, compared to £1.9 billion in June. Only figures for trade in goods for countries outside the European Union are available for August, but they showed a deficit of £1.1 billion.

In July, the total value of exports of goods fell by 1 per cent to £13.3 billion while total imports of goods was unchanged at £15.2 billion.

Imports rose by 1 per cent to a new monthly record level. The ONS said that imports were getting worse, with exports flat and imports rising.

City analysts said that last week's revisions to past trade figures had upgraded the surplus on services by £400 million a month, and that exporters were being forced to cut prices in order to compete.

Neil Parker, Treasury economist at the Royal Bank of Scotland, said: "A deficit in traded goods of £1.4 billion is not a particularly good number. Services exports have continued to perform well. But, like traded goods, that performance can only go on for so long, until our services are seen to be relatively expensive. It is just a matter of how long we've got before things go bad."

Ruth Lea, head of the policy unit at the Institute of Directors, said: "The figures are very much as expected, but that's pretty dreadful none the less. If the pound comes off (its high value) and the Bank of England does the decent thing and cuts interest rates we could see a turnaround."

Michael Saunders, economist with Salomon Smith Barney, said: "The trade balance and current account is likely to worsen markedly in coming quarters, but the scale of the red ink will be much less than the late 1980s blowout."

Japan acts to halt bank panic

Alex Brummer Financial Editor

JAPANESE authorities moved to calm financial markets yesterday after placing the Japan Leasing Company in bankruptcy, as part of a government package to restore stability to the financial sector.

Under plans agreed only after the opposition forced the ruling Liberal Democratic Party to change its approach, the government will allow domestic banks to borrow directly from reserves held by the Bank of Japan, so averting a liquidity crisis.

Assistance will be provided by a swap agreement between

the Japanese commercial banks and the central bank, which holds \$210 billion (£125 billion) of foreign exchange. The move is designed to prevent a credit crunch — which would deepen recession and cause crisis in other financial markets — while the authorities struggle to clear up the bad debts in the Japanese banking system.

Kichiji Miyazawa, the finance minister, assured the markets that the collapse of the Japan Leasing Company and the decision to nationalise the struggling Long-Term Credit Bank of Japan was part of a much larger package.

"I expect a positive influence on Japan and the rest of the world from the prospect

of Japan Leasing Corporation creditors, whose shares were sold. Sumitomo Trust & Banking slipped 23 yen to 280.

The move to put Japan Leasing Company, with some \$10 billion of debt, into bankruptcy — the biggest such failure since the second world war — led to frantic trading on the Tokyo stock market.

Those banks in relationships with the Japan Leasing Company and the LTCB were marked down heavily even though the Nikkei followed Wall Street, closing 1.35 per cent up at 13,909.37.

The Topix bank index fell 2.64 per cent. Mitsubishi Trust & Banking Corporation fell 73 yen to 577, leading a list

of Japan Leasing Corporation creditors, whose shares were sold. Sumitomo Trust & Banking slipped 23 yen to 280.

Under the rescue plan, the ruling LDP will allow nationalisation of banks in difficulty and provide funds to lenders who agree to take over the institutions. Approval of this legislation was being seen on the financial markets as key to ending Japan's worst recession of the post-war era. Problem loans have made Japanese banks reluctant to lend, making it difficult for businesses to expand.

Analysts criticised the government's decision to buy LTCB shares at a low value, rather than force the group into insolvency.

UK barometer points to slump

Jill Treasurer

CLOSE Brothers, one of the last remaining independent merchant banks in the City, was punished by the stock market yesterday, losing 10 per cent of its value for predicting the slowdown in the economy would hit its earnings in coming months.

Its shares tumbled to a new low for the year of 455p before ending at 469p, well off their peak earlier this year of 940p.

The specialist merchant bank provided further evidence that trading conditions are going to worsen for the banking sector, which has felt the brunt of investors' jitters

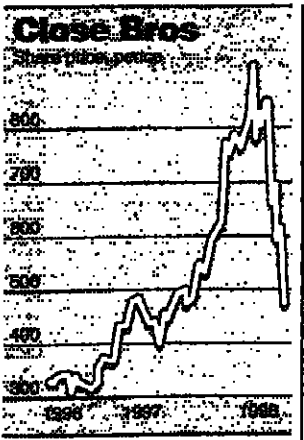
since the crisis in Russia and last week's bail-out of US hedge fund Long-Term Capital Management.

Many City sources are expecting big investment banks to begin cutting jobs as a result of recent turmoil.

Close Brothers, however, is more of a barometer for the domestic economy because it has no exposure to hedge funds or emerging markets.

Rod Kent, managing director of Close Brothers, said the bank had seen signs for the past four months that the UK economy was slowing.

"What we're seeing in the commercial world is people taking a bit longer to pay," Mr Kent said. "We're assuming that its going to continue



slowing down." The outlook could remain tough for at

least another year, he added. Close, which employs 600 people, also reported record results for the year to July, with pre-tax profit at \$38.6 million, up 26 per cent.

Close made 30 per cent of its profit from asset finance, 39 per cent from market-maker Winterflood, and 31 per cent from corporate advisory and fund management.

Mr Kent said Close would seek acquisitions and hire people who might be shed during any downturn.

Accountancy firm KPMG said the past quarter was the best for nine years in the management buy-out market, although it noted that business had declined during the past three weeks.

مكتبة الامير

Football

Di Canio gets into deeper water with 'dive' claim

David Lacey

PAOLO DI CANIO'S claim that Paul Alcock, the referee, pushed him to the ground by the Sheffield Wednesday striker on Saturday, took a dive may well send the Italian's career in English football into freefall, with David Elleray, the referees' spokesman and one of Alcock's Premier League colleagues, urging the Football Association to take the strongest possible action against the player.

Yesterday the FA charged Di Canio with misconduct, a formal finding since the incident occurred in full view of its director of public affairs, David Davies, and was seen in close-up by the nation's television viewers. Di Canio has 14 days to respond and ask for a personal hearing

but, if he declines, the case can be dealt with sooner.

As things stand, Di Canio is likely to receive a suspension somewhere between the four-match ban imposed on Birmingham City's Gary Poole two years ago, for an incident with an official at Manchester City, and the ban of nine games handed out to Chelsea's Frank Sinclair in January 1992 when he was on loan to West Bromwich Albion.

The Sinclair incident involved a clash of heads with a referee in a match at Exeter. Coincidentally, the injured official on that occasion was one Paul Alcock.

Di Canio was sent off by Alcock for kicking Arsenal's Martin Keown amid the fracas which followed Patrick Vieira's fierce reaction to having his shirt pulled by Wim Jonk. Keown was also shown the red card but Arsenal have

formally asked the FA to invite Alcock to reconsider his decision, arguing that the English defender was merely trying to keep the peace.

This appeal has rather more chance of a sympathetic hearing than Di Canio's allegation, made when he arrived in Rome on Sunday, that Alcock had overreacted to a mild shove. "He took three or four sideways steps before falling over in a rather a strange way," Di Canio insisted. "Like someone diving to win a penalty."

Elleray described this view of the incident as extraordinary. "I cannot imagine any referee doing anything like that," he said. "It is quite clear that the one thing Paul was trying not to do was fall down because he wanted to preserve his dignity."

Elleray wants the FA to impose an exemplary punishment on Di Canio, not least because of the number of referees being attacked on park pitches. "These referees are often in danger of serious physical assault," he said. "There are roughly 300 cases every year of referees being attacked and it is one of the main reasons why there are not enough new recruits."

"One accepts the occasional verbal outburst but striking a referee crosses the line and we do not want it to become part of a trend. I have not heard one person offer one word of defence for Di Canio's actions."

Gordon Taylor, chief executive of the Professional Footballers' Association, expects Sheffield Wednesday to sever their links with Di Canio. "I think there is a problem with him at the club," he said, "and we may see a parting of the ways."

Paolo is crying now, says Carbone

PAOLO DI CANIO'S teammate Benito Carbone sprang to his fellow Italian's defence, writes Laurie Madden. "Paolo is very, very down," he said. "He is mentally clear but it's difficult because he is not used to being made a big mistake."

"If I punished Paolo I would punish him just for three weeks. I hope they think Paolo understands he's made a big mistake and not give Paolo a long time. He likes his work, he likes everything in England and now I think he cries for what he's done."

Another team-mate, Dejan Stefanovic, said: "It was stupid because you can't hit referees. It's a bad mistake."



Carbone... mercy plea

Dowie stands in as Harford quits

QUEENS Park Rangers yesterday asked their player-coach Iain Dowie rather than Vinnie Jones, the player-assistant manager, to prepare the team for tonight's match at Wolves and Saturday's visit of Grimsby following the resignation of Ray Harford as manager late on Sunday.

QPR, second from bottom of the First Division, intend to advertise the post and appoint somebody before October 17. "It's nice for me that I have taken over on a caretaker basis but it is a sad day for Ray," said Dowie, aged 33. "He is an honourable man and a top-class gentleman."

"I would love to manage the club permanently but for now all I'm concerned about is taking them forward. I didn't expect it but now I have been given the chance I will try to bring some of Iain Dowie into the Rangers style."

West Bromwich Albion had threatened QPR with legal action when Harford defected

nine months ago. He has since recorded only four wins in 34 League games and decided to resign after Saturday's defeat at Oxford.

"We had lost 4-1 and then I found my car had been broken into for the third time. There I was, window smashed, driving down the M25 with the rain soaking me and feeling as miserable as sin after a bad defeat. I thought to myself, maybe someone is trying to tell me something here."

Gerry Francis, out of football since resigning at Spurs last November, is the fans' choice while Jones has it written into his contract that he will be considered.

Jones did not train yesterday and will not travel to Molineux. "Vinnie called me and said there were no hard feelings," Dowie added. "He is on the shortlist for the manager's job and wants to stay away while that process goes on. He is available for selection but I suppose he wants to get himself ready for the interview."

Everton must sell if they want Watson

EVERTON'S manager Walter Smith has agreed a fee of £4.2 million for Newcastle's Steve Watson but must sell before he can buy.

He hopes to offload the defender Carl Tiler to Sheffield United and the midfielder Mitch Ward to Nottingham Forest. Their combined value is only £1.5 million but Smith, having shown his willingness to name his squad, would then expect his chairman Peter Johnson to sanction the move for Watson, a 24-year-old defensive utility player.

Smith's spending, £15.5 million on five players, is expected to reach £20 million this week with the arrival of Everton's striker Ibrahim Bakayoko from Montpellier.

Steve Froggatt, the 25-year-old Wolverhampton Wanderers wing-back, is expected to join Coventry in a £2 million deal today, underlining City's determination to hold on to their manager Gordon Strachan.



Low-level mission... West Ham's Eyal Berkovic avoids Wayne Bridge's outstretched leg in a challenge at Upton Park last night

PHOTOGRAPH: PHIL COLE

Premiership: West Ham United 1 Southampton 0

Wright upsets patience of Saints

Trevor Haylett

AN Ian Wright header meant the depression which has hung over The Dell since the start of the season refused to budge last night, even though this was a committed, improved performance from the Premier League's basement side. It did not help Southampton's mood when a Ken Moncur "equals" eight minutes from time, was controversially ruled out.

If anything was going to raise Southampton from the slump, it had to be the sight of their claret-and-blue shirts. The last time Dave Jones and his team had won was at

Upton Park in April, when they scored four times, and they also put three past West Ham last season at The Dell. Goals have been hard to come by lately for the Saints, who had failed to find the net in their previous three Premier League away games.

West Ham had John Hartson again leading the attack with Neil Ruddock and Julian Dicks returning in defence. With Mark Hughes now marauding in the midfield area for Southampton, it was not an occasion for those of a nervous disposition.

Dicks, back in Premiership action after an 18-month injury absence, threatened first for West Ham, giving support to Hartson who had been

found superbly by Frank Lampard. The left-back forced Paul Jones to plunge to his right to make the save.

Southampton had another escape when Ian Pearce, raiding down the right, sent over a cross which clipped Francis Benali and brushed the bar.

Despite that, Harry Redknapp would not have been overjoyed at West Ham's opening efforts. They were not at their best and Southampton saw enough of the ball to extend their initial ambition of escaping with a point from a goalless draw.

Unsettled towards the end of the first half Matthew Le Tissier cracked a powerful drive which brought out a good block from Shaka Hislop.

West Ham introduced Stan Lazaridis and John Moncur at the start of the second half in an attempt to provide the attacking width so sorely absent in the first 45 minutes.

However Southampton should have the ones to score when Claus Lundekvam arrived late in the penalty area to meet Le Tissier's free-kick, only to direct a strong header too high.

As the tempo increased a goal began to look increasingly likely, and it was West Ham who provided it after 61 minutes. A bout of pressure saw the ball eventually reach Lazaridis, whose left-wing cross was aimed deep towards Pearce at the far post. The big defender, in an unfamiliar

right-back role, could have gone for goal himself but instead headed the ball across the penalty area where the unmarked Wright swooped low to nod it into the net.

Wright's effort condemned the visitors to their sixth defeat in seven games. Wright then took the role of Paul Alcock and Neil Ruddock Di Canio as they re-enacted the Hillsborough events for their goal celebration. It can be a funny old game at times.

Southampton (4-4-2): Jones, Warner, Moncur, Lundekvam, Benali, Gibbons, Palmer, Hughes, Le Tissier, Gosselin, Bridge. Referee: U. Rennie (Sheff Wed).

Overseas football

Germany set out to recapture their own lead

Chris Taylor

TIME was when English football, from Glenn Hoddle down, looked to the mighty Germans for the model of how to run the game: representative teams from schoolboys up playing a similar system, seamless transition of coaches at the top and an off-field organisation that ensured continuity and consistency.

Suddenly Germany look a very bad example. After their second successive disappointing exit from a European Cup at the quarter-final stage, followed by a couple of lacklustre friendly results, the coach

Berti Vogts bailed out, fed up with the media hounding. Despite his Euro 96 success, he was seen as having failed to uphold Germany's tradition of victory.

An embarrassing period spent casting around for a successor ended with the German FA, the DFB, settling on the 61-year-old Erich Ribbeck, who had all the hallmarks of a stopgap. Several top coaches turned down the job or were unavailable.

Ribbeck, whose assistant Uli Stielike, is only the seventh man to hold the position since 1925. German newspapers have laid much of the blame for

the "chaotic" state of their national game at the door of the DFB president Egbert Lenz.

But Beckenbauer warned that some problems will not be easily solved. "We simply lack outstanding footballers," he observed.

Germany went to France 98 with a team reliant on veterans because, Vogts said, the younger generation was not good enough.

Ribbeck, meanwhile, has confirmed Oliver Bierhoff, 30, as the captain of a provisional 26-man squad for next month's Euro 2000 qualifiers against Turkey and Moldova.

There is no place for the playmaker Stefan Effenberg, who has announced he is quitting the national team again only weeks after a brief rapprochement with Vogts, who had not picked him since he was sent home for gesturing at the crowd at USA 94.

There is room, however, for a promising youngster called Lethar Matthäus, whose international career has spanned five World Cup finals. He had been out of the side for 3½ years before being recalled for France 98. The 37-year-old is set to make his second international comeback of the year in Turkey on Saturday week.

Pools Forecast

(Pools given)

FA CARLING PREMIERSHIP

1 Blackburn	2 West Ham
3 Coventry	4 Aston Villa
5 Derby	6 Leicester
7 Leeds	8 Charlton
9 Manchester United	10 Tottenham
11 Arsenal	12 Everton

MATTOWNS LEAGUE

1 Barnley	2 Bolton
3 Bradford City	4 Tranmere
5 Bury	6 Wigan
7 Grimsby	8 Rotherham
9 Huddersfield	10 Oxford
11 Ipswich	12 Peterborough
13 Luton	14 Shrewsbury
15 Stockport	16 Walsley
17 Wrexham	18 Wigan
19 Wigan	20 Wigan

SECOND DIVISION

1 Blackpool	2 York
3 Bristol City	4 Walsley
5 Luton	6 Walsley
7 Walsley	8 Walsley
9 Walsley	10 Walsley
11 Walsley	12 Walsley
13 Walsley	14 Walsley
15 Walsley	16 Walsley
17 Walsley	18 Walsley
19 Walsley	20 Walsley

THIRD DIVISION

1 Blackpool	2 York
3 Bristol City	4 Walsley
5 Luton	6 Walsley
7 Walsley	8 Walsley
9 Walsley	10 Walsley
11 Walsley	12 Walsley
13 Walsley	14 Walsley
15 Walsley	16 Walsley
17 Walsley	18 Walsley
19 Walsley	20 Walsley

FOURTH DIVISION

1 Blackpool	2 York
3 Bristol City	4 Walsley
5 Luton	6 Walsley
7 Walsley	8 Walsley
9 Walsley	10 Walsley
11 Walsley	12 Walsley
13 Walsley	14 Walsley
15 Walsley	16 Walsley
17 Walsley	18 Walsley
19 Walsley	20 Walsley

FIFTH DIVISION

1 Blackpool	2 York
3 Bristol City	4 Walsley
5 Luton	6 Walsley
7 Walsley	8 Walsley
9 Walsley	10 Walsley
11 Walsley	12 Walsley
13 Walsley	14 Walsley
15 Walsley	16 Walsley
17 Walsley	18 Walsley
19 Walsley	20 Walsley

SIXTH DIVISION

1 Blackpool	2 York
3 Bristol City	4 Walsley
5 Luton	6 Walsley
7 Walsley	8 Walsley
9 Walsley	10 Walsley
11 Walsley	12 Walsley
13 Walsley	14 Walsley
15 Walsley	16 Walsley
17 Walsley	18 Walsley
19 Walsley	20 Walsley

SEVENTH DIVISION

1 Blackpool	2 York
3 Bristol City	4 Walsley
5 Luton	6 Walsley
7 Walsley	8 Walsley
9 Walsley	10 Walsley
11 Walsley	12 Walsley
13 Walsley	14 Walsley
15 Walsley	16 Walsley
17 Walsley	18 Walsley
19 Walsley	20 Walsley

EIGHTH DIVISION

1 Blackpool	2 York
3 Bristol City	4 Walsley
5 Luton	6 Walsley
7 Walsley	8 Walsley
9 Walsley	10 Walsley
11 Walsley	12 Walsley
13 Walsley	14 Walsley
15 Walsley	16 Walsley
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NINTH DIVISION

1 Blackpool	2 York
3 Bristol City	4 Walsley
5 Luton	6 Walsley
7 Walsley	8 Walsley
9 Walsley	10 Walsley
11 Walsley	12 Walsley
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TENTH DIVISION

1 Blackpool	2 York
3 Bristol City	4 Walsley
5 Luton	6 Walsley
7 Walsley	8 Walsley
9 Walsley	10 Walsley
11 Walsley	12 Walsley
13 Walsley	14 Walsley
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ELEVENTH DIVISION

1 Blackpool	2 York
3 Bristol City	4 Walsley
5 Luton	6 Walsley
7 Walsley	8 Walsley
9 Walsley	10 Walsley
11 Walsley	12 Walsley
13 Walsley	14 Walsley
15 Walsley	16 Walsley
17 Walsley	18 Walsley
19 Walsley	20 Walsley

Results

Football

FA CARLING PREMIERSHIP

1 Blackburn	2 West Ham
3 Coventry	4 Aston Villa
5 Derby	6 Leicester
7 Leeds	8 Charlton
9 Manchester United	10 Tottenham
11 Arsenal	12 Everton

MATTOWNS LEAGUE

1 Barnley	2 Bolton
3 Bradford City	4 Tranmere
5 Bury	6 Wigan
7 Grimsby	8 Rotherham
9 Huddersfield	10 Oxford
11 Ipswich	12 Peterborough
13 Luton	14 Shrewsbury
15 Stockport	16 Walsley
17 Wrexham	18 Wigan
19 Wigan	20 Wigan

SECOND DIVISION

1 Blackpool	2 York
3 Bristol City	4 Walsley
5 Luton	6 Walsley
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THIRD DIVISION

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FOURTH DIVISION

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FIFTH DIVISION

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SIXTH DIVISION

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SEVENTH DIVISION

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EIGHTH DIVISION

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NINTH DIVISION

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TENTH DIVISION

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9 Walsley	10 Walsley
11 Walsley	12 Walsley
13 Walsley	14 Walsley

Football

Uefa Cup, first round, second leg

Liverpool wary of falling on double-edged Kosice sword

Ian Ross

THERE are two different ways of looking at Liverpool's home appointment with Kosice, though that has nothing to do with the Merseyside club's bold experiment in shared managerial responsibility.

Liverpool's form in the domestic arena has been so poor since they visited Slovakia a fortnight ago that tonight's meeting with a team of limited ability could be said to represent a godsend, a perfect opportunity to exorcise the ghosts in the machine.

The contrary view — equally plausible — is that a contest which died when Liverpool scored their third goal without reply in the first leg holds only the potential for embarrassment.

That Liverpool will progress to the next round is certain. The question is whether their passage will be achieved at a cost to a reputation which is so jealously protected.

It is a standard football catch-22: play well, win well and no one pays the slightest heed; play badly, lose and the world laughs in your face. In short, it is a game Liverpool could do without.

The talk yesterday of maximum respect for opponents who will possibly enjoy their

duty-free shopping more than their football was probably at the behest of those selling tickets.

But, despite reduced admission prices, it is unlikely an audience much in excess of 20,000 will witness the last rites at Anfield.

The dubious quality of the opposition may even prompt Liverpool to recall the former England goalkeeper David James in place of Brad Friedel, who was less than convincing during last week's 2-0 defeat at Manchester United.

"We can't defend Brad for the mistake he made at Old Trafford," said Liverpool's joint manager Roy Evans.

With his side in a comfort zone, Evans will rest Steve McManaman, who is troubled by an Achilles injury, and may also give a break to his captain Paul Ince.

But there will definitely be room for Robbie Fowler, a fitter and seemingly wiser young man after a seven-month absence because of a knee injury.

"During the time I was out injured there were a lot of accusations thrown at me relating to drugs," he said. "The rumours badly affected me. I would be walking through town and I would hear shouts of 'druggie' and 'smack-head'. That was as low as I could get."

Norwegian test for Collymore

Russell Thomas

STAN COLLYMORE will embark tonight on the most important phase of his so far disappointing Aston Villa career.

Collymore confronts the Norwegian part-timers of Strømsgodset tomorrow. Manager John Gregory has opted for experience rather than the raw talent of the teenager Darius Vassell, whose two late goals completed his club's 3-2 victory in the first leg a fortnight ago.

Collymore, making his first start for Villa in six months after a brief reintroduction against Middlesbrough on Saturday, must justify his club's record £7 million outlay to demonstrate he is worthy of a regular place in a team that has soared to the top of the Premiership with-out him.

Gregory is sanguine about his decision: "The fact that Stan has played only four minutes is not a problem. He has shown the right attitude in training and worked hard to regain his fitness."

Collymore realises, however, that he has much to prove. "I've got goals which I've set," he insists, "but I'm keeping them to myself so as not to put any pressure on myself."

The injured Blackburn strikers Kevin Gallacher and Martin Dahlin could yet figure in Rovers' Uefa Cup clash against Lyon tonight. Both of them, together with Chris Sutton (damaged ankle) and Kevin Davies (ill), were left behind when the squad flew to France from Blackpool airport yesterday.

But they subsequently came successfully through a training session and, if they pass fitness tests this morning, they will be travelling to France "on the next plane" according to the Blackburn manager Roy Hodgson.

Celtic may find reasons to be careful

Patrick Glenn

CELTIC spearhead the remaining Scottish clubs in Europe, facing Vitoria Guimaraes of Portugal tonight in the Uefa Cup with a 2-1 lead from the away leg.

Rangers' return with Beitar of Jerusalem at Ibrox has been put back to Thursday because of Yom Kippur — the first leg finished 1-1 — and on the same night Hearts, in the Cup Winners' Cup, play Real Mallorca in the first leg of the tie.

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Big Mac's last blast... Mark McGwire launches his 70th homer of the season into the St Louis bleachers as the Cardinals sign off with a win. ELSA HANSH

Baseball

Homer odyssey ends on a high

Mike Carlson

"IT'S absolutely amazing. It blows me away. Reaching the 70 plateau — I never, ever thought about it."

Thus spake Mark McGwire after ending his spectacular slugging season the way he started it, by hitting a pair of home runs, taking to 70 his Major League record haul of homers in a single season.

After five months and 163 National League games, McGwire signed off by steering St Louis Cardinals to a 6-3 victory over Montreal Expos on Sunday.

"I don't think you can use your mind any more playing baseball. I've amazed myself that I've stayed in a tunnel for so long," he helpfully explained.

Even he was not sure of keeping the record he took from Roger Maris, who hit 61 homers in 1961, as his rival Sammy Sosa went into last night's concluding game for Chicago Cubs needing four homers to match McGwire. Only in America.

Rugby Union

Official fog over Pienaar outburst

Robert Armstrong

TWICKENHAM was giving careful consideration yesterday to Francois Pienaar's pungent criticism of the referee Chris Rees in the wake of Saracens' 22-20 Premiership Cup victory over London Scottish at The Stoop on Saturday.

South Africa's former World Cup captain could face a possible charge of bringing the game into disrepute if he is deemed to have crossed the thin line between legitimate comment and a swinging personal attack on the competence of the London official.

However, there was a degree of confusion among Rugby Football Union officers over the standing of the recent guidelines on post-match comment put forward by Nick Bunting, the RFU's national referee development officer.

This month Bunting said coaches and referees would be prohibited from commenting to the media on the rulings of match officials, but

yesterday an RFU spokesman suggested the guidelines were under further review and "not cast in tablets of stone".

Pienaar, who is the player-coach at Saracens, was upset by Rees's second-half penalty count of 16-1 against his team. "The referee should encourage rugby the way we try to play it and not try to stop us," he said. "When a game is not allowed to flow it is not exciting. Sixteen penalties against us makes watching difficult."

Though Saracens scored eight tries, there was a gap of 35 minutes between the sixth and seventh during which time the bulk of the penalties were conceded. Pienaar, who is not normally associated with complaints about referees, believes Saracens were not given a fair chance to have the chance to run it.

Meanwhile, Brian Baister, chairman of the RFU management board, has emphasised

the need to set up a British League next season that "will give the top players the opportunity to play quality games which are of the right kind to attract money from sponsors and TV". In his view an "elitist" British League of 10 sides would underpin a healthy Six Nations Championship, in which everyone "would have to keep their competitors strong in order to stay in business".



Pienaar... blamed referee

Baister suggested that such a league together with six French clubs would provide a viable basis for a new European cup competition. "Among England's Premiership clubs we have half-a-dozen investors who could get their fingers burned if we don't get our act together," he explained. "A lot of progress has been made but you don't wipe out three years of distrust overnight."

Wales have brought the full-back Mike Rayer in from the cold — more than four years after his last cap. The 35-year-old Cardiff player is among six additions to the coach Graham Henry's national squad to prepare for their Test against the world champions South Africa at Wembley in November.

Henry has also called up the uncapped Richmond wing Nick Walne, his club colleague Craig Quinlan, the former Wales captain Jonathan Humphreys, Ebbw Vale's scrum-half David Jewell, and the Llanelli forward Chris Wyatt.

Ice Hockey

Ayr pumped up as they look to bounce Czechs

Wic Batchelder

AYR Scottish Eagles must improve on their debut in the European Hockey League tonight if they are to have any chance of reaching the play-off round in January. They entertain the Czech side HC Chemopetrol Litvinov on the back of a disappointing result two weeks ago.

Much of their performance then was encouraging before three late goals by Mannheim saw them slip to a 6-3 defeat. For most of the game they had matched the German champions and Ayr's acting captain Denis Purdie is hoping his side will take heart from that as well as learn the final lesson.

"We showed in the game against Mannheim that we can play with the big boys," he said. "We've now got to show we can beat them as well."

Purdie will continue to lead the side in the absence of the club captain Angelo Castano, who is serving a one-month suspension after testing positive for

pseudoephedrine following last season's Superleague Championship play-off final.

David St Pierre is a definite non-starter after undergoing surgery for a trapped nerve in his right hand while the Eagles are also likely to be without Scott Young, the defender who missed the weekend's Benson & Hedges Cup matches with Edinburgh due to injury.

Eagles, the B&H Cup holders, came out of the hat with Bracknell Bees in yesterday's draw for the quarter-finals. The other ties will see Cardiff facing London, Sheffield up against Manchester and Nottingham meeting Newcastle Riverkings.

Nottingham's coach Mike Blaisdell described Newcastle as "a team who can really be a spoiler. They have a couple of our ex-players in Jim Mathieson and Blake Knox, too, so they'll be fired up to play us."

All ties will be played over two legs, home and away, between October 15 and 26.

Rugby League

Bradbury is accused of attack

John Hazley

THE Salford forward David Bradbury will appear before the League's disciplinary committee today after an alleged attack on Bradford's Harvey Howard during Sunday's final Super League match of the season at Odsal.

Bradbury, a Great Britain tourist in 1996 who was making his comeback from injury, was sent off for a high tackle moments after being placed on report for a similar offence. X-rays showed serious bruising to Howard's jaw but he hopes to play for Bradford in Friday's Grand Finals play-off tie at St Helens.

"That Bradbury should... use his arms to attack the head of Harvey Howard defies belief," said Bradford's coach Matthew Elliott.

But Salford's chairman John Wilkinson said: "It is totally inaccurate what Elliott alleges. The League have stated there has been no case to answer for the first alleged offence. In my 17 years as chairman I've never heard such comments put out by another club."

London Broncos' declared policy of reducing their dependency on overseas players gained credibility yesterday when it was confirmed they had signed the St Helens utility player Karlie Hammond on a three-year contract.

The 24-year-old, signed by Salford from Widnes three years ago for £55,000, moves to The Stoop as a free agent. "I am disappointed to be leaving St Helens but their contract offer was totally insufficient," he said.

The Broncos are being allowed seven years to conform with the future limit of five overseas players.

Wakefield will have to curtail their celebrations over their first division Grand Final win and Featherstone have something to take their minds off their defeat because both play in the opening round of the Treize Tournoi on Saturday, Trinity at Villeneuve and Rovers at Llanelli. The second division champions Lancashire Lynx face St Eustice.

American Football

Coach under fire after Redskins are bucked by Broncos

Mark Tran in Washington

WASHINGTON's other crisis deepened over the weekend as the Redskins sank to their fourth successive defeat amid growing calls for the resignation of the coach Norv Turner.

While President Clinton is bouncing back from adversity, Turner might be gone more quickly than one can say impeachment.

The Redskins melted before the Denver Broncos 38-16 on a sweltering afternoon at Jack Kent Cooke stadium. Many in the crowd were besting a retreat well before the end of the game and those left behind booed the team off.

Washington capitulated after halftime as they had done in their first three games, and they are expert-

ending their worst start to a season since 1981.

"It's rock bottom," said Leslie Shepherd, a wide receiver. "You always say don't panic. Don't worry. Well, panic. Worry. We have got to get out of it."

The Redskins made things easy for the Broncos. Trent Green threw two interceptions and lost a fumble; the team committed numerous penalties and showed deficiencies at every level of the game. With that kind of help from their opponents, Denver cruised to victory even without John Elway, who dressed in civvies on the sidelines as he nursed a hamstring injury.

Bobby Brister, playing as a starter for the first time since 1996, backed up well, completing 16 of 24 passes for 180 yards and no interceptions. "It is good to show people

that I can still play," he said. "It feels good playing with a team like this. This is a machine and I was glad to have the chance to run it."

Denver, the Super Bowl champions, got another penetrating performance from Terrell Davis, who rushed for 119 yards including a 42-yard touchdown at the start of the second half.

The Broncos scored in their first possession after Brister connected with Ed McCaffrey for a 19-yard TD, capping an 81-yard drive. Their second TD came on Green's first interception. Under pressure from blitzing linebacker Bill Romanowski, the young quarterback tried to force the ball to Shepherd. It was easily picked off by Darrien Gordon who sprinted down the sideline for a 55-yard TD.

Denver's scoring machine went into overdrive in the second half. Vaughn Hebronn scampered in for a 44-yard TD on a kick-off return and four plays later Davis burst through the middle virtually untouched for his TD.

When the Broncos widened their lead to 31-7, through Brister's 14-yard TD pass to the full-back Howard Griffith, draw for the quarter-finals.

The other ties will see Cardiff facing London, Sheffield up against Manchester and Nottingham meeting Newcastle Riverkings.

Nottingham's coach Mike Blaisdell described Newcastle as "a team who can really be a spoiler. They have a couple of our ex-players in Jim Mathieson and Blake Knox, too, so they'll be fired up to play us."

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SportsGuardian

Banks
says
'chuck
book' at
Di Canio

Jon Brodwin

THE Football Association should "chuck the book" at Paolo Di Canio, the sports minister Tony Banks said yesterday.

Banks called for a severe punishment to be meted out to the Sheffield Wednesday striker, who as expected was charged with misconduct by the FA for pushing the referee Paul Alcock to the ground.

"This was an incident too far," Banks said. "All of us involved in football, whether as supporters or players, have shouted at the referee as passions run high."

"But you cannot assault the referee. There has to be a limit; the referee stands between us and chaos and this was totally unacceptable."

"This is a matter for the FA and I think they should chuck the book at him. This is so serious that an example has to be made of the player. To say that the referee took a dive is just compounding what he has done."

David Platt, who brought Di Canio to Sheffield Wednesday from Celtic for £4.5 million in the summer of 1997, said he believed the incident would end the Italian's stay at Hillsborough.

"I think it is a sad conclusion to a career because he is a sparkling player who added flair and panache to Hillsborough," said Tottenham's acting manager.

"But he was not an easy player to manage because he played his own game. I don't think there's any doubt Sheffield Wednesday will sell him."

David Lacey, page 14

Super League wheeler-dealer on the borrow



Question time... Bernie Ecclestone is planning a massive deal but being coy about his target

PHOTOGRAPH: PASCAL RONDEAU

Ecclestone in
£1.2 billion
mystery deal

Mark Milner finds the grand-prix supremo putting 'Formula One Eurobonds' up for sale - but keeping the reason a secret

BERNIE Ecclestone, the commercial inspiration behind Formula One's burgeoning fortune who recently admitted his involvement in plans for a European football super league, has revealed his intention to borrow up to \$2 billion (£1.2 billion) from international investors - but not his reasons for raising the money.

A spokesman for the newly incorporated company Formula One Finance, Stephen Mullens, said he could not give details of how the money would be used other than that it would be invested "for the long-term benefit of the Ecclestone family trust's beneficiaries". Ecclestone's wife Slavica and her two children, the money will be raised by selling "Formula One Eurobonds" - effectively borrowing money against future television revenue, which has to be repaid, rather than by selling shares.

Suggestions that the money would not be ploughed back into Formula One have prompted speculation as to why Ecclestone would wish to raise such a large amount of short-term cash.

He already owns the world's most advanced digital television operation, which travels to every grand prix on the Formula One calendar offering a multi-channel service to subscribers across Europe. A further injection of

cash would put Ecclestone in prime position to provide digital coverage of the European Super League as proposed by the Italian company Media Partners, whom he has been advising, and currently under discussion by Europe's leading football clubs.

"I am particularly looking forward to continuing our pioneering work in digital television," admitted Ecclestone, who is also president of the Formula One Constructors' Association.

Although Ecclestone was recently forced to postpone a stock-market flotation of Formula One, Mullens said that grand-prix racing did not need the money "because Formula One is very cash positive".

He did, however, admit that it was hoped the bond issue would smooth the way to a conventional stock-market

flotation in "two or three years' time".

Mullens added that Formula One was looking to produce even greater revenues through wider geographical coverage, expanding its merchandising interests and by continuing to develop its pay-per-view capability.

When the sport's original flotation was postponed, concerns expressed by the European Commission's competition authorities over the agreement between Ecclestone's companies and motor racing's Fédération Internationale de L'Automobile (FIA) - which gives Ecclestone exclusive television rights for grand-prix races - were blamed for the delay.

Yesterday, however, Mullens proffered a different explanation.

"We realised the City did not understand the company and perhaps we did not understand the City."

According to a statement accompanying the bond issue's announcement, this "is an important first step towards greater financial accountability for Formula One and builds investor awareness of Formula One and its economic potential".

The statement added that it believed the concerns raised by the EC over the broadcasting deal with the FIA "have now been, or can be, dealt with".

Mullens said the flotation's continued delay did not relate to the European Union investigation. "It has nothing to do with the EU. We have always co-operated with the EU and have a very good record of working with them."

Suggestions
that the money
would not be
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into F1 have
prompted
speculation

Jim White

A new show
of respect
for the ref
who hit back

IT WAS lucky for Paolo Di Canio that he did not have to deal with an official called John Nitka on Saturday, or, as Nitka is known in amateur football circles across north-west London, the referee who slapped a player in the face.

Nitka's revenge took place in the middle of last season, causing sufficient stir to warrant the main headline on the sports pages of the Jewish Chronicle.

But, as the story of the pugilistic whistle-blower filtered through, instead of the outrage that might have been

anticipated Nitka found the reaction he was mostly engendering was sympathy; privately many a ref identified with him and expressed no surprise that an official had finally snapped. Such was the direction the amateur game was taking that most people were amazed it had not happened earlier.

In many ways Nitka's story is typical. A decent amateur player who clung on as long as possible, he finally retired at the age of 39, when his knees were grumbling louder than Edward Heath. But soon, realising the extent of his Sunday morning addiction to football, he went on a course, passed the exams and landed a refereeing qualification. And quickly he discovered he had a facility for the job.

"The major part of refereeing is anticipation," he says. "And I found from playing for many years I could see what was going to happen. I feel refs who haven't played aren't as good. But of course, if you don't start until you've retired from playing, you'll never get very far up the ladder because it takes so long."

His instinct for what was about to happen had been further honed by the fact that, when he was a player, he had been sent off several times. This was a ref alert for the dirty tricks. And down in the

Middlesex leagues, where he Bourlaises his cards, trouble is never far away. Here Di Canio looks a model of restraint and respect for authority.

"The second game I ever ran I sent a player off and, as he was on his way, he kicked me," recalls Nitka, who receives £15 for his weekend pains. "I've regularly been abused during and after many a game, sometimes before. Over the past seven years I've been refitting it's got more and more lippy. They're copying from what they see on television. And you don't have to be a lip-reader to see continual dissent and abusive language among the top players."

MOREOVER Nitka maintains refereeing in the amateur game is a very lonely occupation. "Ninety per cent of the time you get linesmen supplied by the clubs who have been known to be biased," he says, thus confirming every fans' long-held prejudice. "You get no support from them at all. I remember once feeling very alone after a match in Staines. There had been a ruck and afterwards one manager suggested I'd better get off the pitch quick. I got in my car and drove off, never to return to Staines." Which, in truth, is not the greatest of hardships. The lowest point for Nitka,

though, came when he took an under-18 match in the middle of last season. "It was fairly rough. I'd booked two or three, there had been some handbags and, with about two minutes to go, I had to speak to a guy who had already been booked. I didn't want to send him off so close to the end, obviously, but he started getting very lippy, so I told him to button it or he'd be off. He didn't zip it, it got worse, so I gave him the red card."

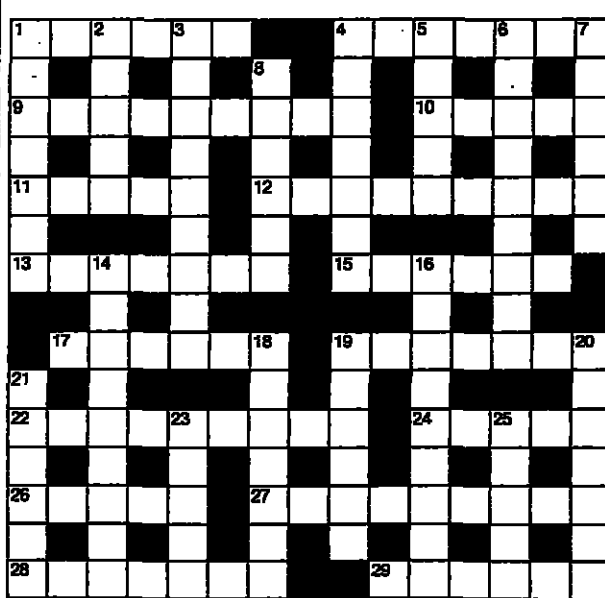
"After the game I went into the lad's dressing-room to inform his manager that I was obliged to send in a report. As I left the room, the player rushed at me, haranguing me, screaming abuse. I thought he was going to attack me, so I slapped him."

Such was the furore at the man in black turning the tables that he received a three-month ban. The player, meanwhile, was suspended for four weeks.

"What so many of these players don't realise is this: without a referee they can't have a game of football," he points out. Undeterred and his ban concluded, Nitka is back in action and so far this season he has not encountered a single incident, not even a peep of dissent. "No, I've not had any trouble," he says. "But then they all know me now, don't they?"

Guardian Crossword No 21,392

Set by Janus

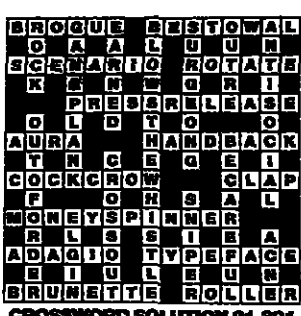


Across

- 1 Painter's bedfellow (6)
- 4 Be at home with fashionable custom (7)
- 9 Fish workers it is plain! (6)
- 10 Dangers of first racing skis, perhaps? (5)
- 11 Season we are told to plant (5)

Down

- 1 Stock letter (7)
- 2 Wine that is all right in water (5)
- 3 Where animal losses head on embankment (8)
- 4 Gives details of how schools work? (7)
- 5 A bird or part of another one (6)
- 6 Sailor coming up with sand component as an ointment (8)
- 7 Perhaps it's a north-east drink (6)
- 8 A terminal letter in a bar perhaps or big shop (6)
- 14 Foolish sheep climbing to reach a flower (6)
- 16 Watchful attendant at outside broadcast (8)
- 18 He was known to paint or draw upper-class sport (7)
- 19 She wrote to the French about nets (6)
- 20 Runs for climbing gear (7)
- 21 King in whiplash crowd (6)



23 A letter's beginning (5)
25 Long to embrace a political writer (5)

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HOPE THIS REF'S NOT A PUSHOVER

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